

Hafa Adai!

Lee Pan wants AMP transferred to the CNMI govt. **PAGE 2**
DPL also sues ex-MPLA board member Ana Castro. **PAGE 5**

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NMI govt websites are back

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Starting last July 10, some CNMI government websites became inaccessible, including that of the Legislature's, but many of them have already started coming back online.

» **'No data was compromised'** According to Ron Smith, president of Angil Design, Inc. that hosts many of the sites, these websites are now online and fully functional at this time. They are also finalizing the See **WEBSITES on Page 4**

UNLESS INDIVIDUAL MEETS CRITERIA Self-quarantine is discontinued

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

With the CNMI's recent posi-

tive COVID-19 cases coming from newly arrived passengers from Guam, it has been decided to discontinue self-

quarantine procedures, unless the individual meets the criteria to have the choice of self-quarantine.

That "unless," said Esther Muña, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s chief executive. See **DISCONTINUED on Page 4**

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, July 22, 2020

| GUAM | OLD | NEW | TOTAL |
|-------------------------------------|--------|-----|-------|
| Positive | 327 | 3 | 330 |
| Recovered | 235 | 7 | 242 |
| Active | 80 | 3 | 83 |
| Deaths | 6* | 0 | 6* |
| Cumulative Number of Persons Tested | 19,219 | | |

| SAIPAN | OLD | NEW | TOTAL |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----|-------|
| Positive | 38 | 0 | 38 |
| Deaths | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Cumulative Number of Persons Tested | 11,338** | | |

*Total includes a sailor from the USS Theodore Roosevelt.

**Total includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor



NEW TOWER CLOCK

The façade of the Mount Carmel Cathedral now has a new tower clock, courtesy of the Emon Masonic Lodge No. 179, which donated the new clock after the old one was destroyed in the onslaught of Super Typhoon Yutu in October 2018. The new clock was officially turned over yesterday to Bishop Ryan Jimenez.

KRIZEL TUAZON



Department of Corrections officers escort 22-year-old Jess Sowar to the CNMI Supreme Court courtroom for bail hearing last Friday. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

A 22-year-old man was recently arrested for allegedly trying to remove the pants of a homeless woman who was

sleeping in an open tarp in Chalan Kanoa.

The Office of the Attorney General filed an information

Tuesday charging Jeff Sowar with disturbing the peace.

According to assistant at- See **HOMELESS on Page 4**

'No overnight completion of ACS'

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Two months after showing off the proposed Alternate Care

Site at Kanoa Resort in Supe, the facility is not fully complete yet. Warren Villagomez, who heads the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force,

now says that dealing with medical equipment is not an overnight process.

The facility was originally See **ACS on Page 4**

INSIDE



BUSINESS

An online boutique store called Koki Catalpa opens on Saipan, with pickups in Dandan.

PAGE 11



NATION

The powerful Republican speaker of the Ohio House and four associates were arrested.

PAGE 12



ASIA

The Pentagon is considering "adjustments" to its military presence in South Korea.

PAGE 13



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Local

Lee Pan wants AMP transferred to the CNMI govt

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Rep. Joseph Lee Pan Guerrero (R-Saipan) wants the CNMI government to take over and run the American Memorial Park, citing it as a means to expand tourism further in the CNMI.

With his introduction of House Bill 21-119, Guerrero intends to raise revenue through the park, while at the same time, save money for the

Marianas Visitors Authority in conducting its events on-island. Guerrero is also proposing for MVA to oversee the operations of AMP. Right now, the AMP is federally-run facility under the National Parks Service.

The bill seeks to compel the governor to request the U.S. Secretary of Interior to transfer the administration of the park to the CNMI, as authorized by U.S. Public Law 95-348. That federal law also states that all improve-

ments to the park shall then be transferred without cost to the CNMI government, but that after the transfer, the cost of development, administration, and maintenance for the park will be shouldered by the CNMI.

"This will be a great venue for a cultural center, and all these activities, Flame Tree [Festival], Taste of the Marianas, nightly street market, and so forth. ...We're talking about tourism, and what

a better venue to centralize than here," Guerrero said in an earlier interview. "It's walking distance from Garapan, where all the hotels are. ...With all the activities that we have, the use of the facility limits us, the local government, from utilizing it because of certain restrictions that are in place."

At a House session, the lawmaker also expressed concern that the "iconic pavilion" on the property would soon be

underwater, yet the National Park Service has no interest in fixing it for the past 40 years, not even bothering to fix the road nor the overgrown vegetation at the beach.

"This is something that we need to do now because we are talking about reviving the economy of the CNMI. ...We need to start taking a proactive approach in how to improve the economy of the CNMI," Guerrero stressed.

Stating that the bill is a "major step" and that the administration of the park will present significant costs to the Commonwealth, Rep. Tina Sablan (D-Saipan) said that it is possible to have community events at the park and that AMP has new leadership.

Currently, the law, as it stands, states that no fee or charge may be imposed for entrance or admission into the American Memorial Park.

'Appropriation laws, annual budget law do not affect amounts allocated to PSS'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The NMI Settlement Fund asserts that the appropriation laws for the settlement agreement payments in Betty Johnson's class action and the CNMI's fiscal year 2020 annual budget law are valid continuing appropriations and do not affect the amounts allocated to the Public School System.

The NMI Settlement Fund, through counsel Nicole M. Torres-Ripple, said the Planning and Budgeting Act does not prohibit the Legislature from setting the amount of general revenues in which to base PSS' 25% appropriation, or from making an appropriation to PSS based on that amount.

Torres-Ripple cited these points in the NMI Settlement Fund trustee's reply Tuesday to PSS' opposition to the Settlement Fund's motion asking the U.S. District Court for the NMI to enforce the final judgment against PSS in connection with the Johnson class action.

Torres-Ripple said they filed this reply despite PSS' opposition not being filed on time under the District Court Local Rules and Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

Torres-Ripple said the Legislature may lawfully appropriate amounts for the Settlement Fund and provide for those appropriations in the annual budget law while also appropriating PSS' 25% based on total general revenues and still achieve a balanced budget.

PSS and Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, through counsel Tiberius Mocanu, are suing Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Finance Secretary David Atalig before the Superior Court to guarantee for PSS an annual budget of not less than 25% of the Commonwealth's general revenue. PSS and Ada allege that Torres

and Atalig are in violation of the NMI Constitution.

PSS and Ada said that Public Law 21-08, which set the Commonwealth government's budget for fiscal year 2020, appropriated \$37,718,904 to PSS, which is approximately 16% of the budget.

Because of PSS and Ada's lawsuit, the Settlement Fund filed a motion requesting that the District Court resolve PSS' challenges to the constitutionally-mandated payment obligations owed the Settlement Fund under the settlement agreement entered in Johnson class action.

Ada and PSS opposed the motion.

In the Settlement Fund's reply Tuesday, Torres-Ripple said a declaration that the budget law appropriations for the Johnson settlement agreement payments are unconstitutional does not remedy and is not a legal solution to PSS' problem.

She said PSS sought to invalidate the appropriations to the Settlement Fund in the Superior Court action, and that the Settlement Fund argued that the appropriations laws are not invalid or unconstitutional.

Torres-Ripple said PSS now concedes that Section 2 of Public Law 20-33 and a statute are "valid earmarks," and that the "Legislature may divert business gross revenue taxes into a special fund" to make the Johnson settlement agreement payments.

She noted that PSS further concedes that the payments under the Johnson settlement agreement are "constitutionally rooted" and that the "obligation...is mandatory."

Considering these concessions, Torres-Ripple said, the federal court should grant the Settlement Fund's motion and find that the appropriations laws are valid and constitutional, and PSS is not entitled to amounts appropriated to the Settlement Fund (past, present, or future).



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MVA thanks Tasi Tours for Managaha stewardship

As Tasi Tours prepares to end its 30-year concession operation of Managaha Island in the Marianas, the Marianas Visitors Authority thanked the company for its stewardship of the iconic islet.

Tasi Tours was selected by the CNMI government as master concessionaire of Managaha in 1989. Since then, the company has built environmentally appropriate tourism facilities on the island and made other

improvements to help improve the safety and satisfaction of the millions of tourists who have visited the island.

"Over the last three decades, Tasi Tours has worked with the local government and commu-

nity to grow Managaha from a weekend picnic spot for locals to that and much more.

"Managaha is the most iconic place in the Marianas for visitors," said MVA managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo. "For example, under their care Managaha has won the No. 1 Readers' Choice Award for Best Beach and Snorkeling for over consecutive 10 years at Dive and Travel Awards of the Marine Diving Fair in Japan, where the MVA promotes the Marianas each year. Tasi's service at Managaha sets the example for how our beautiful destination should be cared for, and we thank them."

In addition to its white sand beaches, the tiny island boasts a wide number of environmental, cultural, and historic attractions. Tasi Tours has supported the protection of the islet's fragile ecology, where several species of sea bird nest. During their tenure the island was also declared a marine conservation area. The island is the final resting place of Chief Aghurubw, who helped the indigenous Carolinian people first settle in the Marianas. World War II historic fortifications can still be explored on the island.

In MVA's most recent exit survey of visitors, approximately 80% of those surveyed had visited Managaha,

making it the most popular tour among tourists.

Tasi Tours concession agreement will end on Aug. 31, 2020. (MVA)

USCIS launches an updated website

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services launched yesterday a redesigned website, which is designed with input from applicants, petitioners, and the public.

"In addition to a new look and feel, we have improved the website to help web visitors better navigate our existing online tools and resources, as well as to file and manage applications and petitions online," said a USCIS press release.

It is also making information about its processes easier to find by streamlining navigation based on user feedback, data and best practices. The updates will be uniform across all USCIS websites, including uscis.gov, [myUSCIS](https://myuscis.gov) and Case Status Online.

The new website features include:

- A new user-centered design, which allows web visitors to easily find immigration information and options on any device;

- A link to the USCIS online account sign-in at the top of all pages on uscis.gov, which allows web visitors to easily access their existing account or create a new one. This also creates a streamlined experience between the USCIS online account and the uscis.gov website;

- Increased access to and availability of Spanish and multilingual resources through en-

hancements made to the Spanish website (gov/es) and the Multilingual Resource Center;

- The addition of the Explore My Options feature to the forms section of the uscis.gov website. This tool allows web visitors to determine their potential eligibility for immigration options by answering a few questions. The Explore My Options tool will also include additional content in English, and, for the first time, it will be available in Spanish;

- A new design, location, and complete revision of the Citizenship Resource Center (CRC). The new CRC makes it easier to find information about citizenship. For the first time, much of the content in the CRC will now be available in Spanish; and

- An enhanced on-page search and filter-by features, which allow web visitors to easily find agency data, reports and policies.

With the new web design, visitors to uscis.gov will reportedly be able to quickly complete tasks more quickly, find forms that they may need to file their applications, and find information for all of their questions.

"We continue encouraging visitors to use our online tools and resources,

ON THE NET

uscis.gov

Group hands out 370 bags of food

In the last three Fridays, a newly-formed group has handed out over 370 bags of food to families in need during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

"The Giving Table," a network of friends who donate canned goods and nonperishable food items to anyone who needs them, has handed out whatever they collect in different places during austerity Fridays. There is no need to sign up for anything. Residents may be able to pull up and take what they need.

According to Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan), last Friday morning's distribution got a tremendous boost, thanks to several donors. "We had a huge boost thanks to some kind friends. Paul Plunkett, Jon Kramer, Eugene Chung, and Yooyoung Chung brought boxes of canned goods and bagged them that morning and helped pass them all out as well," he said.

"There are a lot of people in the community who lost their jobs and also do not qualify

for federal assistance under the Nutrition Assistance Program and WIC (a federally-funded supplementary nutrition program)," said Propst.

Over 150 bags of food and other items were given out last Friday. In fact, Propst said, it was their biggest day for donations.

"All donations have come from social networks of friends and family members. It has grown through word-of-mouth," Propst said. "...I am motivated by the good we see in our community on a daily basis. Every good deed helps, and those who need the help the most can be helped if we all do a little."

He hopes to for a non-profit or group to eventually lead this effort—"or something similar for every village while we see hundreds of families struggling due to this pandemic."

The Giving Table will be handing out donations this Friday at the Dandan bus stop in front of Dandan Middle School starting at 8:30am while goods last. (Chevy Alipio)

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Probe on Torres' NI trip postponed to next week

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The House Special Committee on Fiscal Review of Execu-

tive Expenditures will begin the investigation into Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' executive expenditures as well as his recent Northern Islands trip

next week.

According to committee member Rep. Tina Sablan (D-Saipan), the committee is set to discuss subpoenas that the

committee will issue to various government agencies involved in the investigation of executive expenditures next Thursday.

"We are going to discuss the subpoenas the committee was going to be asked to vote on so we need a majority vote to issue a subpoena. We had a number of subpoenas we were going to request

for Finance and for other agencies that have been involved," she said.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

ACS

From Page 1

set for completion on May 25, which was then moved to May 28. At that time, Villagomez said that critical medical equipment were still on the way. This time, he says the

medical equipment are still being put through their paces.

"You've got to go through parameter checks...and sometimes some equipment actually need to have pigments on them so there're mannequins that we're working with to assure that the limits on the machines are in place," said

Villagomez.

Additionally, he said that there are biomedical services—which provides support for biomedical equipment that provides services for the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.—at Kanoa Resort, as well as facilitating all the needed work that needs to be done.

"It's not an overnight completion. So it's ongoing, it's really much very active as we speak and it will [continue to] be active," said Villagomez, even with patients that will be transferred over to the ACS.

As for as the quarantine site at the former Mariana Resort & Spa in Marpi, Villagomez

said that it is on its final stage of being retrofitted. "We are, I believe, in the final stage. ...We have all the government partners on the...services that are needed for Mariana Resort," he said.

Villagomez added that there are contract services for managing the front end of the operation. The Mariana Resort & Spa should be in full implementation as a quarantine site starting today, Villagomez said last week at the news briefing last July 17.

The U.S. Department of the Interior recently approved the CNMI to drawdown \$2,518,897 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security, or CARES, Act funds. This emergency relief funding was made available under the CARES Act through the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs to

prepare, prevent, and respond to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Of that amount, \$371,800 will be used to prepare the former Mariana Resort property to serve as a quarantine site for inbound passengers. Over 100 rooms in varying sizes will be made available for COVID-19-related activities and for patients should cases reach upsurge limits or if the virus should spread exponentially within the community.

Villagomez stressed that it's important to know the difference between a quarantine site and the ACS, with the ACS being an actual medical care site that will treat patients, where they can bring in patients to provide care, while a quarantine site is where arriving passengers are quarantined upon arriving on Saipan.

HOMELESS

From Page 1

torney general Erin K. Toolan in the charging document, Sowar attempted to remove the woman's pants while she was sleeping last Thursday.

A \$500 cash bail was imposed on Sowar.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho agreed Tuesday to convert the preliminary hearing yesterday to an arraignment and change of plea hearing.

Police detective Shannon A. Dela Cruz stated in her report

that the Department of Public Safety dispatched officers last Thursday at 3:48am, to respond to a report of attempted rape along Doctor Torres Drive in Chalan Kanoa.

Dela Cruz said the police learned that the victim is a homeless woman who currently lives in an open-air tarp next to an abandoned and destroyed house. The alleged victim told police that she was sleeping at about 3am or 4am when someone she identified as Sowar tried to pull her pants down. A police officer later drove around the area and spot-

ted Sowar who was walking along Doctor Torres Drive.

Sowar was then arrested.

The victim told police that she was lying down and saw Sowar standing between her legs. She sat up quickly on the edge of a plywood bed frame. Sowar told her that he wants "something," but she replied she has a boyfriend. Sowar replied that's he's not her boyfriend because they were sleeping separately.

She said she slept in a separate bed because it was hot and her boyfriend slept on another futon that was next to the futon she had slept on. Both fu-

tons are made of plywood.

Another man (witness) who lives with the victim and her boyfriend in the tarp told Sowar to leave. Sowar allegedly did not listen and kept calling her to follow him outside. The boyfriend woke up and yelled at Sowar and that's when he left.

The witness said that, prior to that incident, Sowar had also awakened his wife, who was sleeping on the bed of a Toyota Tacoma, which was near the tarp. The witness said his wife woke him up because Sowar was bothering her. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

WEBSITES

From Page 1

Legislative Bureau site to be back today, and are waiting on the transition for the Zoning Board's website. It is anticipated that all affected sites will be restored to full functionality on or around July 29.

Smith explained that an incident at their data center in Dallas, Texas, resulted in the database and backup servers

being taken offline on July 10, where it was determined that data on these servers were not compromised (all sensitive data is encrypted to industry standards), but were no longer accessible.

"Angil Design took immediate steps to contract with a different data center and begin the process of moving over 100 sites. Sites with .mp domains, however, take longer to move, as doing so requires a manual process. We

are still waiting for this process to be completed for some sites," he said.

Smith apologized for the inconvenience that this incident has caused and assured everyone that they are taking aggressive steps to mitigate this type of issue in the future. "Moving forward, we have built new servers here on Saipan that will synchronize with the data center on an hourly basis and have daily offline backups. This will al-

low rapid redeployment of site data in the case of an outage or loss of data at a given data center," he said.

Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios earlier directed press secretary Kevin Bautista to make sure that all government agencies stay on top of their websites, to keep the community informed, especially with social distancing protocols in place due to the pandemic.

This came after complaints from the community, and even from within the agencies, of not being able to access the websites to request for permits and submit applications online, check for jobs, or file complaints and report issues, for the past week, following being down

Among the agencies affected were the CNMI Department of Labor, Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality, Scholarship Office, CNMI Legislature, and the CNMI Zoning Board.

Bautista now says that plans are in the works to make the gov.mp website a central hub for other departments and agencies' websites to link with, to make access easier for the community.

"I've spoken to members of our of the governor's and the lieutenant governor's Cabinet, and the positive thing is that we're all readily on board on increasing our technological capacity, and to ensure that servers on each website are maintained and that information is regularly updated," Bautista added.

ecutive officer, means that CHCC's health representative will determine if you are allowed to self-quarantine. She did not elaborate.

Additionally, all passengers, including returning residents, are still required to be tested on the first and fifth day upon arrival. Although returning residents may be able to provide a polymerase chain reaction test that has been done within three to six days, they are still tested upon their first and fifth day upon arrival, Muña said at the news briefing last July 17.

The former Mariana Resort & Spa in Marpi is due to become the government's new quarantine facility starting today. It used to be the Pacific Islands Club Saipan but that contract has already expired.

According to the new COVID-19 public guidance for incoming passengers that became effective last July 9, all incoming passengers must complete the following to be exempted from the CNMI government's quarantine facility, which includes:

- Valid PCR test within three to six days prior to arriving on island; it will be reviewed by a CNMI health representative.

- The PCR test result must be in English and have:

- The name of the traveler
- Name of the processing laboratory

- Specimen collection date
- Indication that the PCR test was conducted and the test itself

- The Sara Alert Symptom Monitoring System allows

CNMI public health representatives to enroll and follow up with individuals at risk of developing a COVID-19 infection. Enrolled individuals can report daily on any symptoms they are having to reduce transmission and exposure in our community. If you are non-responsive or report any symptoms, a CNMI health representative will contact you and provide further instruction.

There will be exemptions, though. "Whether it's Federal Emergency Medical Agency response, medical doctors, nurses that are transporting patients...in response to any disaster. ...While there is a situation where there is an emergency, you have critical workers that need to come in and do their job," said Muña.

That these individuals can be exempted from being quarantined so that they can do their work but they still have to provide a PCR test and fill out the CNMI mandatory health declaration three days prior to arriving. She also stated that if they don't come with a test, they will be tested upon arrival and sent to the quarantine site to wait for the result and once it is clear, they are allowed to go out and do their work.

As far as testing goes for Tinian and Rota, Muña said that they are working to have both islands confirm their swabs on their islands instead of sending it to the Commonwealth Health Center on Saipan. No further information was given.

Warren Villagomez, who heads the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, said that the process that's in place has been working, and the same goes with the neighboring islands of Rota and Tinian.

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Telephone: (670) 664-4282 • Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

AMENDED PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 et seq), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Board of Directors hereby informs the general public that the Board will hold a **Special Board meeting on Friday, July 24, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** The meeting will be held at the CUC Conference Room, Room 17, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building to consider the following agenda. Public attendance is welcome.

AGENDA*

- I. Preliminary Matters
 - A. Call to Order
 - B. Roll Call
 - C. Reading of the Notice of the Agenda
- II. Request for Transfer of Funds from CUC's Restricted Account to Non-Restricted Account for the following Power Generation Projects:
 - A. Additional Costs for DE5 (Contract No. CUC-PG-20-C006) and DE7 (Contract No. CUC-PG-20-C011)
 - B. Emergency Foundation Repair of DE1
 - C. Extension of Aggreko Contract (Contract No. CUC-PG-20-C005)
- III. Request for Approval to Utilize Sealed Proposals (Ref No. 07-20-022)
- IV. Update on Employees' Contract Addendum
- V. Customer Assistance
- VI. Public Comments*
- VII. Executive Session**
- VIII. Adjournment

* Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to three minutes. Everyone is welcome to submit written comments.

** Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board of Directors may vote in executive session at any time.

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DPL adds ex-MPLA board member Ana Castro as defendant in suit

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Lands has amended its lawsuit to include former Marianas Public Lands Authority board member Ana D. Castro as a co-defendant of her husband whom DPL is suing for alleged violations of the lease to run the post office branch on Capital Hill. Among the alleged violations are failure to operate a snack bar on the premises and untimely payment of rent, among other.

DPL, through the Office of the Attorney General, said that Ana Castro, who is not a party to the lease agreement with DPL, was a member of the MPLA board of directors when the lease was provided to her husband, Jesus M. Castro, to operate a U.S. Postal Service branch on Capital Hill.

Public Law 15-02 abolished MPLA and created DPL in its stead.

DPL is suing Ana and Jesus Castro before the Superior Court for ejectment, trespass, and unjust enrichment.

As of press time, *Saipan Tribune* was still trying to contact the Castros for comments.

DPL's original lawsuit, which was filed by then-assistant attorney general Christopher M. Timmons in 2016, named only Jesus Castro as defendant. DPL's amended complaint, which was recently filed by assistant attorneys general Leslie A. Healer and John Lowrey, named the Castro couple as defendants.

In the amended lawsuit, DPL asked the court to issue a judgment in favor of DPL and to order the Castro couple to immediately vacate and surrender possession of the premises to DPL.

DPL also asked the court to order Jesus Castro pay rent and other monies owed, plus interest allowed under DPL regulations for leases in default. The department also wants Castro to pay for damages for unjust enrichment for continuing to occupy the premises after the lease expired in 2006.

According to Healer and Lowrey in the amended complaint, MPLA leased the gov-

» **OAG: Ana Castro was MPLA director when lease to govt building was provided to her husband**
» **Lessor allegedly paid only \$462 in rent for over 14 years**

ernment building and space to Jesus Castro on May 13, 2003, so he could operate the U.S. Postal Service Capital Hill branch, or CHRB, and a mini snack shop. Healer and Lowrey said that CHRB, a private business, has occupied the premises until now.

The government lawyers said the lease called for payment of \$100 per year for the first three years, and 10% of Jesus Castro's contracted consideration under its USPS contract. The lease was represented to equal a minimum rent of \$3,000 per annum for the first floor of the premises. The lease also called for payment of rent equal to 3% of gross receipts derived from operation of a snack bar on the second floor of the premises during the first six years of the lease. After the sixth year, the lease required Jesus Castro pay an amount equal to 8% of appraised value of the premises.

Yet Jesus Castro never operated a snack bar on the premises, DPL said.

On Nov. 27, 1998, Ana Castro entered into a contract with the U.S. Postal Service to operate the CHRB.

Healer and Lowrey said the Castros have paid a total of \$462 for rent to DPL to use of the premises since the beginning of the lease in 2003, yet DPL has never gave Ana Castro any right to use or occupy the premises.

On Nov. 22, 2006 and March 7, 2007, Jesus Castro was given a written notice of violation of the lease for failing to operate a snack shop; failing to submit copies of his USPS contract, Business Gross Revenue Tax returns, and audited financial statements; failing to submit plans and permits for repairs, renovation and construction; failing to maintain the premises; and failing to provide insurance.

On Sept. 19, 2007, Jesus

Castro was given notice of default for failing to cure the violations and for failing to pay rent on time. On Feb. 7, 2008, Jesus Castro was given a written final notice for failing to cure the violations and failing to make timely rent payments. Again, on Oct. 14, 2008, Jesus Castro was given another written notice of violation for continuously failing to make payments on the account.

On Nov. 28, 2008, Ana Castro wrote DPL to ask it to amend the lease and to add her name to the lease, Healer and Lowrey said. About a month later, on Dec. 29, 2008, DPL denied the request and gave additional written notice of violations due to unpaid arrears.

On June 21, 2010, Jesus Castro was given a final notice of default, which stated that "failure to comply with [the final notice] will result in immediate termination of the lease and DPL will close lessee's operation of a postal service on Capital Hill...." Five days later, Jesus Castro was given written notice of termination based upon those notices.

On Aug. 3, 2010, Ana Castro allegedly wrote DPL to ask for a meeting to discuss a new lease.

On Nov. 10, 2010, DPL gave the defendants more time to submit a request for a new lease and to pay the unpaid arrears.

On Feb. 15, 2011, Jesus Castro was given written notice to vacate within 15 days and to pay the outstanding arrearages. This was repeated on Nov. 28, 2011, this time giving him a written notice to vacate within 30 days and to pay the outstanding arrearages. And for a third time, he was again given another written notice to vacate within 15 days and to pay the outstanding amounts.

Healer and Lowrey said that, on Jan. 16, 2013, Jesus Castro wrote DPL releasing the snack shop portion of the

lease and requesting the lease be renewed in his wife's name.

On June 1, 2016, Jesus Castro was given written notice to vacate and to pay the outstanding arrearages.

On June 1, 2016, Ana Castro asked for a meeting. Fourteen days later, she met with DPL and DPL's legal counsel to discuss the terminated lease, request for a new lease for no rent, and arrearages. Healer and Lowrey said that no agreement was made.

On Oct. 2, 2019, Ana Castro was served with a written

notice that ordered her to vacate the premises within seven days. To date, the lawyers said, Ana Castro continues to occupy the premises and to operate the CHRB on the premises. To date, they said, Ana Castro has paid nothing for her use and occupation of the premises. To date, the lawyers said, Jesus Castro has only paid \$462 in rent under the lease.

They said the 2003 lease between Jesus Castro and MPLA has expired and has been terminated due to his breach of the lease agreement.

Healer and Lowrey said the Castros have no legal basis to occupy the premises and con-

tinue to occupy the premises unlawfully.

"Because defendants have no legal basis to occupy the premises, DPL is entitled to have both defendants ejected from the property," the lawyers said. They said defendants must be ordered to vacate the premises and to pay appropriate damages for their unlawful trespass. Defendants have allegedly used the premises without authorization for more than 14 years.

On June 1, 2016, DPL allegedly served Jesus Castro a three-day notice to pay the sum of \$58,780, but he refused to pay.

We want to keep you connected

CONTACT US FOR PAYMENT PLAN OPTIONS

We understand that these are unprecedented times, and it's important to stay connected and informed. Please contact us for payment plan options.

Chat with us live at store.ite.net/live-support or call us at 682-4483. If you prefer to stop by our stores to speak with a customer service representative, a friendly reminder that we are open from 7:30am to 3:30am Monday to Friday and closed on weekends and select holidays. Please wear a mask.

We will get through this together!

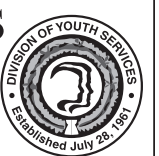
IT&E



DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & CULTURAL AFFAIRS
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

1st Floor Chalan Piao Plaza P.O. Box 501000 C.K. Saipan, MP 96950



PUBLIC HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT

This is to inform the general public that the Division of Youth Services under the auspices of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs will be conducting Public Hearings on the Consolidated Block Grant under the authority of the Social Services Block Grant – Title XX on the following dates and time:

| ISLAND | DATE | TIME | VENUE |
|--------|---------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Saipan | July 20, 2020 | 5:30 p.m. | Kagman Community Center |
| Rota | July 22, 2020 | 2:30 p.m. | Rota Mayor's Office |
| Tinian | July 27, 2020 | 5:00 p.m. | Tinian Elementary School |

Electronic copy of the FY2021 Consolidated Block Grant Intended Use Plan may be viewed on the links herein stated:

DYS Website: www.dys.gov.mp
GOVERNOR'S Website: www.gov.mp

For more information, or to retrieve a hard copy, you may contact Vivian T. Sablan, DYS Administrator at 237-1000 or via email: vsablan@dys.gov.mp

/s/ Vivian T. Sablan
DYS Administrator

/s/ Robert H. Hunter
DCCA Secretary

NAVFAC awards \$60M deal for AE services in Pacific

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM—Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific awarded yesterday a \$60-million indefinite-delivery indefinite-quantity architect-engineering contract to POWER Engineers, Inc., of Meridian, Idaho, for architect-engineer services for various electrical engineering projects and related services at various locations within the NAVFAC

Pacific area of operations.

The work to be performed provides for AE electrical services; engineering studies; plans, specifications, and cost estimates including preparation of design-build request for proposal contract documents or design bid build contract documents; functional analysis concept design development; and post construction services. Projects may in-

volve new construction, alteration, repair, and installation of electrical facilities and systems.

Work will be performed at various Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and other government facilities in Guam and the CNMI, Australia, and Hawaii.

The term of the contract is not to exceed 60 months with an expected completion date of July 2025. (USN)

A call to look at disenfranchisement in US territories, DC

Equally American and DC Vote, along with co-sponsoring organizations, have requested a thematic hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on the denial of the right to political participation in U.S. territories and the District of Columbia. The request highlights the disenfranchisement of the nearly 5 million Americans living in Washington, D.C. and the territories—more than 90% of whom are racial or ethnic minorities.

The IACHR is a regional human rights mechanism that

has authority to monitor compliance by the United States with the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, including Article XX on the right to political participation. One way in which the IACHR monitors human rights situations in the Americas is by conducting thematic hearings. These hearings provide a space in which civil society, government representatives, and the IACHR

can engage in cross-cutting dialogue on a specific human rights issue in one or more countries of the Organization of American States.

“An IACHR thematic hearing is an important international forum to raise awareness on these timely and important questions of citizenship and voting rights in U.S. territories,” said Neil Weare, president and founder of Equally American, a nonprofit that advocates for



Weare

equality and voting rights in U.S. territories. “If the hearing is granted, we will be able to bring together experts and witnesses from across the territories to examine how disenfranchisement has impacted the daily lives of these Americans.”

This is not the first time Equally American has advocated before the IACHR. In 2018, Equally American filed an amicus brief on behalf of leaders from Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands in *Rosselló v. United States*, a still-pending

IACHR case arguing that the denial of voting rights in Puerto Rico violates the American Declaration. The case builds on *Statehood Solidarity Committee v. United States*, in which the IACHR concluded that the United States had violated its obligations under the American Declaration by failing to provide full political participation to D.C. residents.

“With the thematic hearing, we will be able to include the IACHR in an even more comprehensive examination of issues facing D.C.,” said Bo Shuff, executive director of DC

Vote, which fights for full and equal representation for D.C. residents. “With Congress currently considering the Washington, D.C. Admission Act to make the District a State, an IACHR hearing would help shine an international spotlight on the ongoing disenfranchisement of residents of D.C. face.”

If the request is granted, Equally American and DC Vote, along with selected experts and witnesses from the territories and D.C., will present on the issue of political participation during the IACHR’s 177th Period of Sessions between Sept. 28 and Oct. 9, 2020. (PR)

New community based testing dates

The Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. would like to provide the following updates for the CNMI Community-Based COVID-19 Testing Initiative:

■ A new weekly schedule with times and locations will be updated every Friday until Aug. 14, 2020.

■ There are workstations available at Kagman Community Center and Kanoa Resort for community members who have not registered. Note that even

though you register at the site, your testing date will be based on the next available slot.

■ For businesses with 50 or more employees and for all government agencies, call 287-0046/287-1089/287-0489 for information on group registrations.

■ People who were previously tested through the Community-Based COVID-19 Testing Initiative are not able to register for testing at this time.

ON THE NET

- Register: www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19/testing
- See results: www.cnmicovidresults.com

Steps

The following are the steps for CNMI Community-Based COVID-19 Testing Initiative:

1. **People interested in being tested for COVID-19, can register online or by phone.**

❖ The registration portal for all islands will be using the Gov-

ernor’s COVID-19 Task Force site at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19/testing. Or call 287-0046/287-1089/287-0489

❖ People who were previously tested through the Community-Based COVID-19 Testing Initiative are not able to register for testing at this time.

2. **Write down your Confirmation ID.**

❖ Your Confirmation ID will be provided to you after you register. TIP: Your confirmation ID is unique to you. It cannot be shared or transferred.

❖ Please use an email address that you have access to when you register online. Your Confirmation ID will be sent to your email. TIP: Check your spam/junk folder

❖ If you want to register over the phone, your Confirmation ID will be given to you by a CHCC COVID-19 Info Line representative.

3. **Prepare for your appointment.**

❖ Bring your Confirmation ID provided to you after registration. Your Confirmation ID is required at your appointment.

❖ Wear a face covering throughout the appointment

4. **Visit your testing site.**

5. **Self-quarantine while**

you wait for your results.

6. **Wait at least 72 hours from the specimen collection appointment for your results.**

❖ Register at www.cnmicovidresults.com

❖ Sign in and search for your result using your confirmation ID

❖ Save or print a hard copy of your results immediately. Results will only be available on this site for a timeframe of two weeks.

Community testing for COVID-19 is not mandatory. It is another surveillance tool to help the task force and CHCC detect and contain the SARS-COV2 virus, the virus that causes COVID-19. Community testing may also help us understand how widespread the virus is in the community.

At this time, community testing for COVID-19 involves inserting a long swab (like a Q-tip) into the cavity between the nose and mouth. This might be more uncomfortable for some people. Getting tested for COVID-19 does not improve response to the illness, nor does it reduce the risk of contracting or transmitting the disease. Our goal is to provide results as quickly as possible within a reasonable time-frame. People who are tested and have a negative result are still vulner-

able to the virus.

Community testing will help us to identify people who may be infected with the virus, especially those who may be pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic, so we can direct these people to the appropriate care, contain the virus, and prevent its spread using tools such as quarantine, isolation, and contact tracing.

Should you test positive for SARS-Cov2, the virus which causes COVID-19, a CNMI health representative will meet with you to help you understand your infection risk. You’ll be ordered to isolate at the designated isolation site to protect others around you. You will be connected to affordable medical treatment if needed, regardless of income or immigration status.

Anyone you have been in close contact with can also access help if you’ve been exposed to the virus. Your information and the information of your close contacts will not be shared.

As a reminder, it is essential for everyone in the community to continue to practice good hand-hygiene, wear a face-covering, social distancing, and limit time spent in public places as much as possible. (PR)

| Island | Date | Time | Location | Drive-Thru/Walk-up |
|--------|-------------|------------------|---|--------------------|
| Saipan | → 7/21/2020 | → 1:00PM-3:00PM | → Kanoa Resort Saipan | Both |
| | → 7/24/2020 | → 8:30AM-11:00AM | → Kagman Community Center | |
| | → 7/25/2020 | → 1:00PM-3:00PM | → Kanoa Resort Saipan | |
| Tinian | → 7/21/2020 | → 8:30AM-11:00AM | → 3 K’s Laundromat | Walk-up |
| | → 7/22/2020 | → 8:30AM-11:00AM | → 3 K’s Laundromat | |
| | → 7/23/2020 | → 8:30AM-11:00AM | → Huangshun Laundromat | |
| | → 7/24/2020 | → 8:30AM-11:00AM | → Tinian Health Center | |
| Rota | → 7/22/2020 | → 1:00PM-4:00PM | → Rota Health Center | Walk-up |
| | → 7/23/2020 | → 1:00PM-4:00PM | → Rota Health Center | |
| | → 7/24/2020 | → 1:00PM-3:00PM | → Sinapalo Basketball Court (next to DFEMS Station 9) | |

STOP THE SPREAD!

Practice the 3 W’s: Wash your hands. Watch your distance. Wear a face covering.

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

■ Practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Limit the size of your gatherings. The risk of COVID-19 spreading at events and gatherings increases as follows:

❖ Lowest risk: Virtual-only activities, events, and gatherings.

❖ More risk: Smaller outdoor and in-person gatherings in which individuals from

different households remain spaced at least 6 feet apart, wear cloth face coverings, do not share objects, and come from the same local area (e.g., community, town, city, or county).

❖ Higher risk: Medium-sized in-person gatherings that are adapted to allow individuals to remain spaced at least 6 feet apart and with attendees coming from outside the local area.

❖ Highest risk: Large in-person gatherings where it is difficult for individuals to remain spaced at least 6 feet apart and attendees travel from outside the local area.

■ Wear a face covering. For more information about DIY face coverings, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

■ Be cautious when dining out and pick up food through drive-thru, take-out, or deliv-

ery options when possible.

■ Plan your errand trips to limit the time spent in public, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

❖ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic:

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

❖ Avoid or limit visiting public places. Do not visit your place of work. You may leave to get necessary medical care, food, or other supplies if no one else in your household is able to fulfill these needs

for you.

❖ Separate yourself from others in your home, especially if you are experiencing symptoms or if others in your home are not in quarantine. Limit visitors

■ Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom if possible.

■ We encourage you and people in your household to wear a face covering.

❖ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

❖ Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

❖ Cover your coughs/sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If there is no tissue, use your sleeve. Not your hands!

❖ Practice social-distancing and wear a face-covering. If you need to go out, maintain at least 6 feet distance

away from others. Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

❖ Take your temperature and keep a log of any symptoms you might have. A fever is 100.4°F or 38°C

The Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force continues to manage COVID-19 inquiries and residents are encouraged to utilize this resource for additional information. The Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force numbers are 287-0046, 287-1089, or 287-0489. These numbers are available Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 6pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 323-6560 or 323-6561. These numbers are available Monday to Friday 7:30am-4:30pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990

For more information

about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>.

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmicccc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force, visit governor.gov.mp and follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Rumor control

During crises like this, the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC. (PR)

Interior awards \$2.5M technical grants to American Samoa

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Department of the Interior has awarded more than \$2.6 million in grant funding to the American Samoa government as part of the Office of Insular Affairs' Technical Assistance Program for fiscal year 2020.

The funds, totaling \$2,560,199, will support human resource development and training, technological upgrades, digitization and preservation efforts, and small business incubation efforts in American Samoa.

"[Interior] Secretary [David Bernhardt] and I are pleased to announce this funding for American Samoa, which will strengthen public services

such as transportation, health-care, and utilities. Funds will also be used to support and encourage the incubation of new business outsourcing efforts and to leverage new high-speed internet connections in the territory," said DOI Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs, Douglas W. Domenech. "We also appreciate Congress for the important funding support that it provides each year to American Samoa and each of the insular areas."

The Technical Assistance Program grants provided to the various departments and offices within the American Samoa government for fiscal

year 2020 are listed as follows:

■ **Department of Legal Affairs - \$499,000** will be used to digitize and preserve land title documents, business and articles of incorporation records, and other important legal registry documents dating back to the 1800s. Funding will also support computer upgrades and record digitization of the immigration and border management system in the territory.

■ **Lyndon B. Johnson Medical Center - \$378,000** will be used to train and certify respiratory therapy technicians as well as procure a new human resources software system, provide training for

staff on this new system, and train and certify respiratory therapy technicians. Funding will also be used to purchase new laboratory equipment and supplies.

■ **American Samoa Power Authority - \$300,000** to upgrade the data center network, which includes the purchase of hardware, software, licensing, back-up modules, installation, and training. The upgrade will include new features to improve cybersecurity, disaster recovery, and service restoration in the event of emergencies.

■ **Department of Port Administration - \$298,000** will be used to update the electronic ticketing and financial operations system for the territory's intra-island ferry services as well as fund an upgrade of the video surveillance and security system at the Pago Pago International Airport.

■ **American Samoa Shipyard Authority - \$266,000** will be used to conduct hazardous waste removal from the shipyard in compliance with the Clean Water Act and other federal environmental protection regulations.

■ **Office of the Administrative Law Judge - \$243,600** will be used to support efforts in the territory to strengthen administrative rule and to improve executive branch responsibilities, such as budget

and policy development, economic development planning, and federal reporting requirements across government agencies in the territory.

■ **Department of Commerce - \$188,800** will be used to support efforts to diversify the economy through outsourcing and help new and early-stage companies seeking to leverage the new high-speed internet infrastructure in the territory and connection to the global market through a business incubator.

■ **Department of the Treasury - \$166,799** will be used to fund two years of participation in annual meetings for tax officials from American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau in the All Islands Tax Administrators Association (AITAA) meetings with officials from the Internal Revenue Service. The AITAA supports tax compliance and revenue management in the insular areas. The American Samoa government is currently managing AITAA administration and participation on behalf of the insular areas.

■ **Department of Public Works - \$130,000** will be used to fund the first year of

an apprenticeship and workforce development training and certification program with the American Samoa Community College to train new heavy machinery mechanics, welders, plumbers, journeymen, and carpenters. Funds will also be used to procure supplies and protective gear necessary for emergency responders in the face of natural disasters such as Cyclone Gita in 2018, which caused flooding and destruction across the territory.

■ **Department of Human Resources - \$90,000** will be used to support the "Road to Recovery: Alcohol & Substance Abuse Initiative" by providing drug test kits and training as part of implementing a new drug and alcohol policy for civil servants in the territory.

All projects are funded through the Office of Insular Affairs' Technical Assistance Program which is made available each year by Congress to support priorities in the U.S. territories and the freely associated states. *(PR)*

231 EIDL worth \$14.8M OK'd in the CNMI

By **IVA MAURIN**

iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. Small Business Administration has approved over 2.6 million economic injury disaster loans nationwide, totaling over \$150 billion. In the Northern Marianas, 231 loans have been approved as of July 15, with the amount totaling \$14,818,300.


SBA also had 5,781,390 advances disbursed, in the amount of \$20 billion, 274 of which were approved for the CNMI, at \$1,337,000.

Small businesses in the CNMI that have been hit economically due to COVID-19 are provided with the low-interest federal disaster loan through SBA, which they can use as working capital.


Up to \$2 million in economic injury disaster loan may be availed of by qualified small businesses, private non-profit organizations, small agricultural cooperatives, and small aquaculture enterprises impacted by the pandemic since Jan. 31, 2020, to help with their operating expenses.

Also, SBA, through its Paycheck Protection Program which helps small businesses affected by the pandemic keep their employees on payroll through funding, has approved 4.9 million loans worth \$518.3 billion nationwide so far. 476 of this is for the CNMI, totaling \$38,701,183.

Small businesses may apply online, or download applications at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela> to avail of this economic injury disaster loan. The deadline to apply is Dec. 21, 2020.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 20-034

Opening Date: March 18, 2020
Closing Date: Until Filled

Safety Officer


Duties: Under the direct supervision of the Chief of Administration or his/her designee. The Safety Officer complies with all occupational health and safety guidelines and ensures that Site Safety and Health Plan is prepared and implemented. Inspect work sites and review working conditions. Responsible for monitoring and assessing hazardous and unsafe situations and developing measures to assure personnel safety. Test workplaces for environmental hazards, such as exposure to radiation, chemical or biological hazards, or excessive noise. Verify availability or monitor use of safety equipment, such as hearing protection or respirators. Investigate accidents to identify causes or to determine how such accidents might be prevented in the future. Inspect or evaluate workplace environments, equipment, or practices to ensure compliance with safety standards and government regulations. Update procedures and policies for new regulations or local ordinances. Supply, operate, or maintain personal protective equipment, ensure all personnel follow all personal safety precautions. Maintain all required environmental records and documentation. Prepares incident and accident reports to document issues/incidents and appropriate corrective actions. Monitors equipment and supplies inventory; requests replacement stock to replenish inventory levels; ensures stock supply and preparedness for responding to oil spills or related incidents. Performs safety related duties after hours, on weekends, and on holidays as needed. Stand-by on-call designation on alternating basis. Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

LOCATION(S): Administration/Safety Office, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, USA.
SALARY: 40,084.00 to \$ 54,113.00 Per annum, Exempt
CONTRACT: Two (2) years, subject to renewal
POSITION(S): One (1)


Minimum Requirements: Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, Business or directly related field and 2 years of directly related experience; or High School Diploma, General Education Diploma, or Adult Basic Education and 6 years of directly related experience. Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Investigative techniques; Mitigation procedures; Safe work practices and procedures; Customer service principles; Modern office technology. Skills in: Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standards; Performing inspections to monitor safety and environmental compliance; Responding to emergency incidents to ensure corrective actions and proper procedures are followed; Monitoring equipment and supply inventory; Conducting and assisting with informational workshops and orientations; Reviewing project specifications and monitoring project work; Providing customer service; Preparing reports and related activity documentation; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. Valid U.S. Driver's License with appropriate class. Position may require the following specialized licenses and certifications: Emergency Responder Certification, Hazmat and OSHA Certifications. Applicants may be tested. Subject to pre-employment drug test.

You may submit your CUC Employment Application and resume at the Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan. Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota can drop it off at the Tinian and Rota Administration office. Application and resume can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer
P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950-1220 U.S.A.
Tel. Nos. (670) 664-4282 Fax (670) 235-5131



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC-RFP-20-007

Archaeological Services for S19-069 Construction of Afetna Sewer Collection Upgrade

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from Archaeologists or firms that meet the U.S. Department of Interior qualifications (36CFR61) to create a work plan, to prepare information, data and documentation needed to conduct Section 106 Review of the National Historic Preservation Act for FY19 for the construction of a new sewerline in Afetna Village, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval of the USEPA.

The existing Afetna sewer system was privately built and poorly installed due to excessive buildup of the Garment Industry. The project aims to replace the old system with approximately 5000 linear feet of new gravity sewer main with new sewer laterals and the installation of sewer manholes.

The scope of Archaeological Services will include, but not be limited to:

- Conducting the necessary research and fieldwork that represents a reasonable and good faith effort to identify historic properties, to include archaeological resources, as set out in the regulations 36 CFR § 800.4(b)(1):
 - Background research design and work plan;
 - Archival background information;
 - Sample field investigation, and field survey;
 - Past planning, research and studies;
 - The magnitude and nature of the undertaking;
 - The degree of federal involvement;
 - The nature and extent of potential effects on historic properties within the APE;
 - The likely nature, identification and location of historic properties within the APE; and,
 - Create a mitigation plan to resolve adverse effects.
- Preparation of the necessary reports and letters for submittal to various federal and local resource agencies to address environmental requirements of Section 106 to completely secure concurrence for the projects ready for construction.
- Deliverables
 - 2 copies of the final report for review and approval to HPO and CUC, and
 - Map showing the location of identified historic properties which would assist with alignment of the sewerline to avoid such properties.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 for one RFP package set.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies of the proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-20-007: Archaeological Services for S19-069 Construction of Afetna Sewer Collection Upgrade" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **August 14, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of the RFP under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the RFP under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on July 27, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Nicolette Villagomez, Water/Wastewater Engineer, via email address nicollette.villagomez@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said RFP, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

A wretched talent for making everything worse

The deployment of federal agents in Portland, Ore., over the objection of state and local officials, to shoot and gas protesters and to snatch people from the street to stuff them into unmarked vans is an unconscionable assault on democracy and a dangerous and needless ratcheting up of tension.

President Donald Trump's action in defiance of Oregon's governor and Portland's mayor has predictably given new life to nonstop protests that began after the May 25 death of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody but at last had begun to peter out. The president has thus employed his wretched talent for exacerbating division and inflaming discord at precisely the time the nation needs a leader to calm overheated passions and fears.

Presidents have broad power to deploy troops to quell lawlessness, but they generally exercise that power only when governors request assistance, or when the commander-in-chief himself determines that state authorities are failing to deal with the problem. They send in federal forces to protect people or to enforce the Constitution, as when President Eisenhower sent troops to Little Rock, Ark., in 1957 to enforce the right of Black students to enroll in a previously all-white high school and to make clear that the famous Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* would be enforced, that the doctrine of "separate but equal" had been overturned, and that state segregationists could not defy the basic American principle that all people are equal under law.

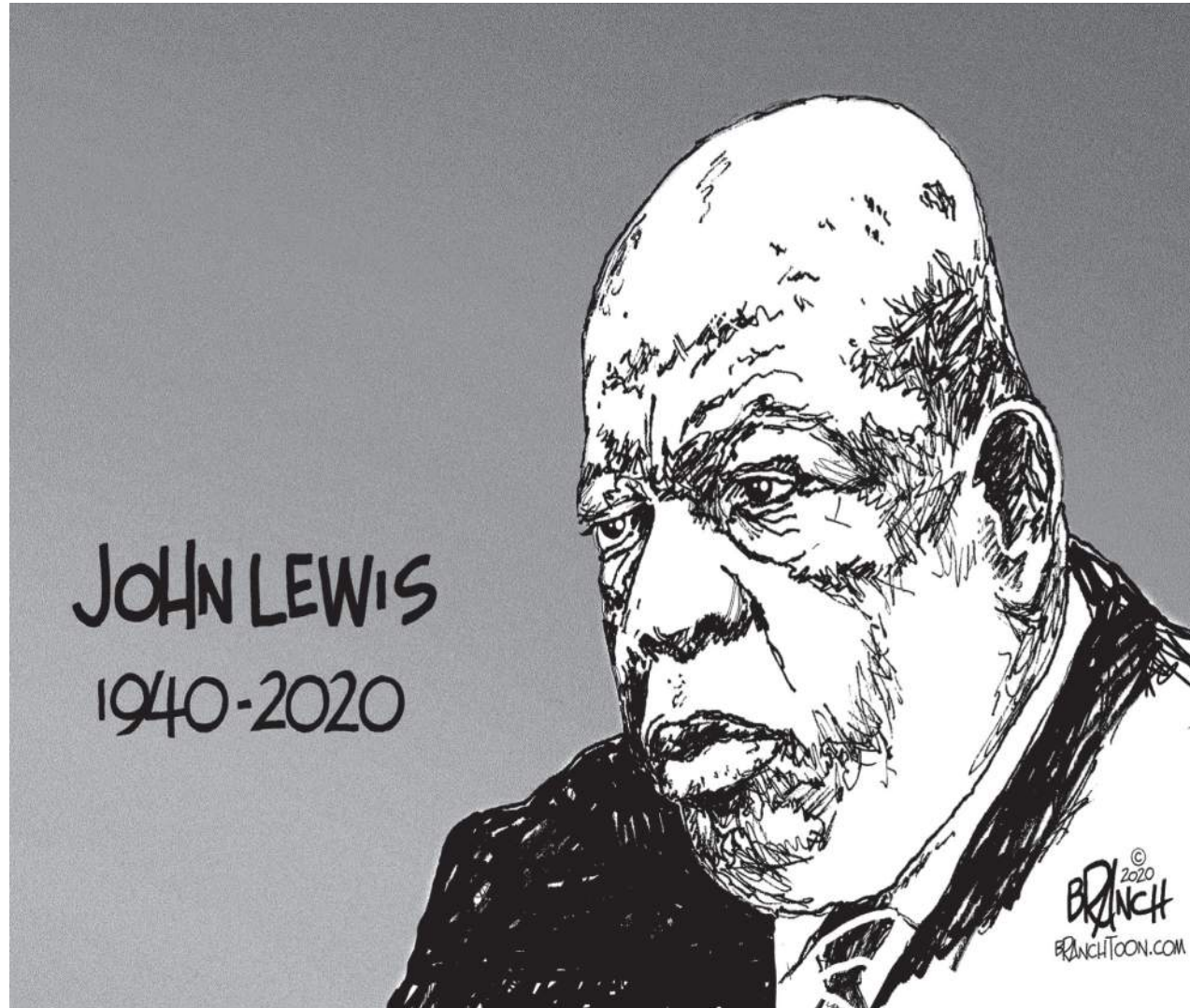
Trump, by contrast, directed federal agencies to use their muscle to protect statues, monuments and other federal properties, not people or the Constitution. And he said Monday that he plans to do this in more cities—evidently, because he thinks displaying force against the citizenry is going to help him in November.

This has become part of his pattern. In the weeks before overreacting to the Portland protests, Trump used troops to clear his path for a photo op near the White House. He set forth his doctrine that "when the looting starts, the shooting starts." He articulated his principle that states should "dominate the streets," and if they didn't, that he would override their authority.

It is a fact that some individuals have used the protests in Portland as an opportunity to destroy property and inject chaos into the demonstrations. It fell to Portland leaders to strike the proper balance. They could respond with force, and thus play into protesters' hands by presenting police engaged in precisely the kind of actions that were being protested; or they could monitor the situation, give protesters the room to make their case, tolerate some property losses and allow the demonstrations to die down on their own.

They made their choices, and they may well have made

See **WRETCHED** on Next Page



Opening campuses is risky. The alternative is worse

Soaring coronavirus infections have provoked a lot of second thoughts among U.S. colleges and universities that were hoping to resume at least some in-person instruction in the fall. That's understandable, but troubling.

It's crucial to engage students in meaningful collaborative experiences that are difficult to achieve on Zoom. The damage to young people and institutions of higher learning will be deep and lasting unless administrators develop creative ways—in concert with both students and faculty—to revive key aspects of campus life.

There's no doubt that even partial reopenings will entail risks for colleges, though different ones from those facing K-12 schools. For one thing, over one-third of tenure-track faculty are 55 or older, significantly more than the general working population—putting college professors at greater risk of contracting life-threatening forms of Covid-19. Then too, while online education is far from ideal even for college students, young adults are better equipped than children to handle virtual classes. College students also have the ability to take a gap year if they don't like their college's educational offerings.

Focusing on freshman, a priority for institutions like Harvard University in Massachusetts and Bowdoin College in Maine, which are allowing some students to return while offering most instruction online, will allow universities to build a campus culture for their newest recruits. Freshman also need help making the transition from high school, where learning often follows mandates, to college where, ideally, they select their own courses and schedules and develop their own intellectual interests.

The pandemic is also a good opportunity for schools such as Princeton University, which are welcoming at least one other grade cohort, to create a buddy culture aimed at supporting younger students and enlisting undergraduates in brainstorming healthy campus interactions and creative solutions to living and learning in a pandemic. Masha Gessen, an author and essayist, suggested in the *New Yorker* that students "could form quarantine study pods" that could "embrace mutual care and interdependence." Such study pods could embark on team-based independent studies that might learn from, and propose solutions to, problems including pandemic living and the social upheaval sparked by the most recent police shootings—both subjects of

By **ANDREA GABOR**

Bloomberg Opinion

Andrea Gabor, a former editor at *Business Week* and *U.S. News & World Report*, is the Bloomberg chair of business journalism at Baruch College of the City University of New York and the author of *After the Education Wars: How Smart Schools Upend the Business of Reform*.



interest to young people.

At a time when colleges are striving to recruit more students from marginalized communities, they will need to make accommodations for their financial and logistical needs. Even schools that are offering mostly virtual courses in the fall should open school buildings, including lecture halls and libraries, for students who do not have a quiet place to work or adequate internet connections at home.

More universities will need to think unconventionally. One model is Rice University in Houston, which is building outdoor structures. Another is Amherst College, which faces much colder weather in Massachusetts, and is erecting 20 tents for seminar-style classes.

All universities should strive to make accommodations for students studying subjects like laboratory sciences and fine arts, which rely on hands-on work. To be sure, these classes will require students and professors to shoulder a certain degree of risk, and will involve unanticipated expense. Oregon State University in Corvallis, for example, guarantees employers that its forestry graduates will be "field ready" and capable of doing everything from measuring trees to collecting data on forest sites—learning that cannot be supervised remotely. For classes with over 50 students, the forestry department will deliver lectures online; labs, which typically have fewer than 30 students and involve van rides to forests around the state, will be conducted in person.

See **OPENING** on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The pandemic may very well last another year or more

By **PETER R. ORSZAG, DAVID GLUCKMAN, and STEPHEN H. SANDS**
BLOOMBERG OPINION

Anthony Fauci has recently taken some heat in Washington for supposedly being too pessimistic about how long it will take to bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control. In fact, the head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases is probably being too optimistic, a new survey of leading health care company leaders and investors suggests.

In congressional testimony and news interviews, Fauci has said an effective and safe vaccine may be available by the end of 2020 or early 2021. Yet almost three in four health care executives and investors believe an effective and safe vaccine will not be widely available until the second half of 2021 or even later.

The survey, conducted by Lazard during the last week of May and first half of June, included 184 executives and 37 investors across pharmaceuticals and biotech, medical technology and health care services—representing many of the world's largest health care entities, as well as smaller public and private companies and prominent investment firms.

The leaders were asked when they think an effective, safe

vaccine will not only exist (arguably Fauci's focus) but also be widely available—which is the most relevant question for the trajectory of the virus. It's dangerous to expect a vaccine to be available sooner than is realistic.

Despite the intensive focus, investment and collaboration across the biopharmaceutical industry, including in new technologies (mRNA, for example) that may speed up development timelines, there are scientific and technical obstacles to creating COVID-19 vaccines, as well as manufacturing and logistical challenges. Such roadblocks explain why biopharma companies have developed only seven truly novel vaccines in the past 25 years.

Most health care leaders also believe it may very well be more than a year or two before there is an effective COVID-19 treatment—if one ever materializes. Indeed, only 49% of health care industry leaders put the likelihood of such a therapeutic at better than even.

Consequently, two-thirds of industry leaders expect the pandemic to continue into the second half of 2021 or beyond—a notably longer time frame than that envisioned by many people in government. The danger is that federal fiscal support will be withdrawn before the pandemic is actually over, and then the

underlying economic damage will become more visible.

After the pandemic, the industry leaders expect to see a significant acceleration of many earlier trends in health care, especially the more efficient delivery of care to patients. They expect to see much greater use of virtual medicine, remote patient monitoring, and care in the home and other alternative places. Executives are also concerned about nationalism, protectionism and the need to secure domestic supply chains.

Most important, however, is their expectation that the world will remain in the grip of the pandemic for at least another year. No one group of people has perfect foresight, but as governments consider the path ahead, they would be foolish to ignore what leaders in the trenches of health care expect to occur.

Peter R. Orszag is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. He is the chief executive officer of financial advisory at Lazard. He was director of the Office of Management and Budget from 2009 to 2010, and director of the Congressional Budget Office from 2007 to 2008. David Gluckman is vice chairman of investment banking and global co-head of health care at Lazard. Stephen H. Sands is vice chairman of investment banking and chairman of the global health-care group at Lazard.

New York is not a COVID-19 model

If only the rest of the country could handle COVID-19 as well as New York.

That's the lament of progressive commentators as coronavirus cases spike in the Sun Belt and the South.

Washington Post columnist Jennifer Rubin hailed New York City the other day after it reported no deaths for the first time during the pandemic. This is what competent government can accomplish, she gushed.

Valerie Jarrett, former aide to Barack Obama, tweeted, "Short term sacrifice saves lives!!!"

This is all perverse given that New York is only now emerging from one of the worst COVID-19 debacles on the planet. There is nonetheless a wide-spread feeling that New York has been blessed with its exemplary leadership. Gov. Andrew Cuomo, in-

credibly enough, has sky-high approval ratings.

If New York is going to be held up as the model, every officeholder in the country has a new road map for handling the virus: See a significant percentage of residents of your largest city get infected, barely prevent your hospital system from getting overwhelmed, implement a policy that increases infections and deaths at nursing homes, suffer more than 30,000 deaths and a higher per-capita death rate than any country in the world -- and then, after all that, get hailed as a hero.

In fairness, New York had many factors working against it. It was hit first, while the virus and how to treat it were still poorly understood, and New York City is an international travel hub with densely packed neighborhoods and a heavily trafficked public transit system. Of course it got hammered.

The outbreaks in other parts of the country aren't anything like what happened in New York, at least not yet. What states like Florida, Arizona, Texas and California are trying to do is avoid New York's fate, even as they are lectured about the superiority of the Empire State's approach.

The positivity rate—the percentage of tests coming back positive—has increased in all of these places, and in Arizona has gone above 20%. During the worst of the outbreak in New York, the seven-day moving average for the positivity rate reached an astronomical 50%.

Deaths are going up, too, but the scale so far is completely different. In New York, about 32,500 people have died. In Florida, a

By **RICH LOWRY**
King Features Synd., Inc.



Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

state of comparable population, about 4,300 people have died. In Texas and California, both bigger states, about 3,300 and 7,000 people have died.

New York should be a watchword, not something to emulate. It is in a better situation now, but only after the virus burned through much of the city. A state survey found that more than 20% of New York City residents have antibodies to the virus. This isn't an experience anyone should want to duplicate.

The fact is that the virus isn't interested in scoring partisan points or establishing the superiority of red state versus blue state governance. It is highly infectious and now is hitting places it missed earlier in the pandemic as they have started to reopen.

We should wish them the very best—and fervently hope they don't suffer the same calamity that befell New York.

WRETCHED

From Page 8

some bad ones. Portland has been on edge for weeks. But Mayor Ted Wheeler is the person answerable to the city's people. He did not need, and did not seek, federal backup.

Trump's insistence on federalizing the situation on his own undermines Portlanders' control of their own city, and exacerbates the violence far more than the protesters' actions did.

The president has in effect equated people protesting police brutality with terrorists, and is treating them as such.

In October, before Trump's impeachment, before the COVID-19 pandemic, before the death of Floyd and before the nationwide protests, the president signed an order creating a Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. As with so many steps Trump takes, this one appeared to be geared directly toward undoing an action of the Obama administration, in this case the creation of the 2015 President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing.

The Obama task force delved into police brutality, racial disparities in arrests and prosecutions, and other challenges facing modern-day policing in the U.S. Its recommendations included enhancing civilian oversight, improving training and building trust and legitimacy. Many of its efforts were rolled back by the Trump administration.

In launching Trump's commission, Atty. Gen. William Barr included as a central question something that apparently baffles him as well as the president: Why is there a "continued lack of trust and respect for law enforcement" in many communities?

The answer is right under their noses. It is spread out on the street with George Floyd, it is shoved alongside protesters into unmarked federal police vans, it stands agog, with many of us, at actions to protect statues but shoot projectiles at people. The president won't look. He sees what he sees, with eyes that won't open.

(c) 2020 Los Angeles Times

OPENING

From Page 8

To accommodate social distancing and the added costs of the pandemic, "everything will shrink," predicted Mindy Crandall, assistant professor of forestry policy at Oregon State, noting that the university's College of Forestry will need to hire more vans to transport students. At the same time, they will have to forgo longer trips that, in years past, exposed students to more forest ecosystems. "Students won't get the breadth of experience and the exposure," she said.

Indeed, public universities especially are facing a host of financial pressures that only extra funding from the federal government can alleviate. With state revenues shrinking due to Covid, universities sorely need an infusion of aid beyond the \$14 billion available through the Cares Act, the \$2 trillion coronavirus relief package that Congress passed in March. For example, Rutgers University in New Jersey has taken a \$183 million hit so far; only \$27 million of that will be made up by funds from the Cares Act.

Colleges breathed a sigh of relief when the administration of President Donald Trump backed away from its threat to withhold visas from international students, who are a source of both intellectual diversity and much-needed revenue. At Baruch

College in New York City, where I teach and where international students made up 11.6% of enrollment last year and paid close to \$19,000 apiece in tuition, it's still unclear what toll Trump administration policies and the pandemic will have on international enrollments this fall.

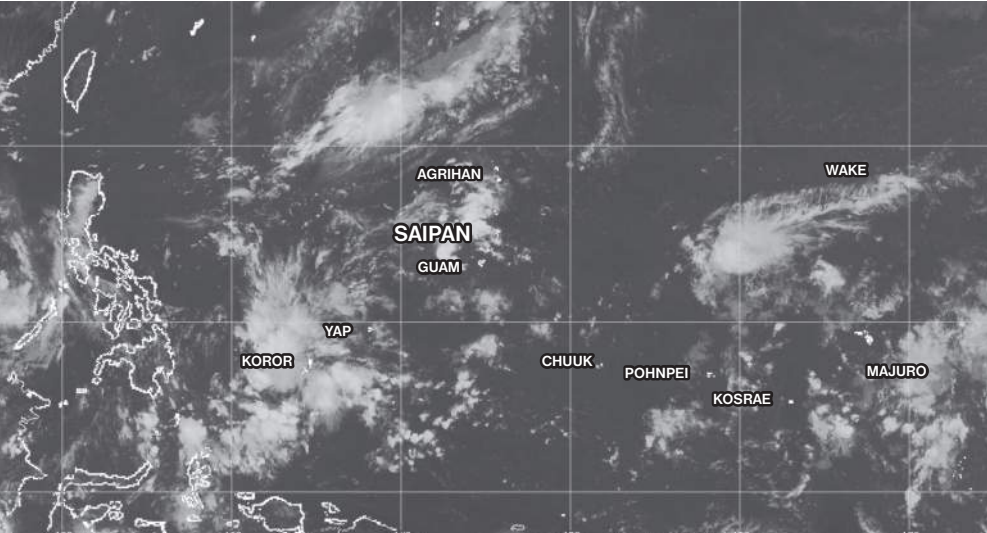
A recent Democratic Senate proposal to add \$132 billion for higher education singles out tribal colleges and historically Black institutions, many of which are now fighting for survival. The historically Black schools produce 42% of the nation's Black engineers and 80% of its Black judges. Such legislative initiatives need to be given priority.

At the same time, university systems like the City University of New York and the University of California that will go almost entirely online in the fall, need to do more to open campuses. Precisely because public transportation and tall buildings on many of these campuses create unique risks, universities need to include faculty unions in their planning. They will also need to lead by example, cutting administrative staff and salaries before demanding concessions from faculty, many of whom are low-paid adjuncts. CUNY recently laid off 2,800 staff, including many adjuncts who will also lose their health-care benefits.

The pandemic will test the ingenuity of college campuses. But even the most creative need political leaders and the public to put education first.

The Weather

| 5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|---|-----|--|-----|--|-----|--|-----|
| TODAY | | FRIDAY | | SATURDAY | | SUNDAY | | MONDAY | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Light and variable winds becoming east 10 to 15 mph in the afternoon. | | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph. | | Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. | | Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. | | Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. | |
| 90° | 79° | 90° | 79° | 89° | 79° | 89° | 79° | 89° | 78° |
| YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE | | | | | | | | | |



PICTURE TIME: 6:50 AM, WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Andersen Air Force Base Doppler weather radar shows isolated showers moving through the Marianas waters. The buoys reveal combined seas of 2 to 4 feet, composed mainly of an east swell and a southeast swell.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklist-household-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

able, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp and follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

- ### Continue good hand hygiene

 - Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
 - Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

- ### Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

 - Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
 - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not avail-

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

| MICRONESIA | | | ▲▼°F |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|------|
| Guam and Rota | Thunderstorms | 89° / 81° | |
| Palau | Thunderstorms | 86° / 77° | |
| Yap | Thunderstorms | 86° / 79° | |
| Chuuk | Thunderstorms | 87° / 80° | |
| Pohnpei | Thunderstorms | 86° / 78° | |
| Kosrae | Thunderstorms | 86° / 80° | |
| Majuro | Thunderstorms | 85° / 81° | |

| DAY | SUNRISE | SUNSET |
|----------|---------|---------|
| Today | 5:57 AM | 6:49 PM |
| Friday | 5:57 AM | 6:49 PM |
| Saturday | 5:57 AM | 6:49 PM |
| Sunday | 5:57 AM | 6:49 PM |
| Monday | 5:58 AM | 6:48 PM |

| DAY | MOONRISE | MOONSET | MOONRISE |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Today | 8:06 AM | 9:06 PM | - |
| Friday | 9:05 AM | 9:51 PM | - |
| Saturday | 10:03 AM | 10:35 PM | - |
| Sunday | 11:00 AM | 11:18 PM | - |
| Monday | 11:57 AM | - | - |

| AROUND THE GLOBE | | | ▲▼°F |
|------------------|---------------|-----------|------|
| Auckland | Partly Cloudy | 59° / 51° | |
| Beijing | Mostly Sunny | 95° / 70° | |
| Hong Kong | Thunderstorms | 89° / 82° | |
| Honolulu | Partly Cloudy | 86° / 75° | |
| London | Cloudy | 71° / 60° | |
| Los Angeles | Partly Cloudy | 76° / 61° | |
| Manila | Thunderstorms | 91° / 79° | |
| Melbourne | Partly Cloudy | 54° / 40° | |
| Miami | Thunderstorms | 86° / 80° | |
| New York | Thunderstorms | 91° / 75° | |
| Osaka | Showers | 83° / 75° | |
| Paris | Partly Cloudy | 83° / 62° | |
| Busan | Rain | 74° / 72° | |
| Rome | Sunny | 96° / 69° | |
| Salem | Partly Cloudy | 93° / 73° | |
| San Francisco | Partly Cloudy | 66° / 55° | |
| Seoul | Rain | 77° / 69° | |
| Tokyo | Thunderstorms | 80° / 72° | |
| Washington, DC | Thunderstorms | 94° / 75° | |

| TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY | | | FEET |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------|------|
| 3:37 AM | LOW TIDE | 1.36 | |
| 8:26 AM | HIGH TIDE | 2.12 | |
| 3:47 PM | LOW TIDE | -0.17 | |
| 10:44 PM | HIGH TIDE | 2.14 | |

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

| DEPARTURES | | | | ARRIVALS | | | |
|--|--------|--------|-------|-------------------|--------|--------|-------|
| SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) | | | | GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN | | | |
| UA 117 | 7:30AM | 8:10AM | 1,4,6 | UA 174 | 5:50AM | 6:30AM | 1,4,6 |
| LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.) | | | | | | | |

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

| SAIPAN TO ROTA | | | | 1207 | 13:00 | 13:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
|------------------|-----------|---------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------|---------|-------------------------|
| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY | 1208 | 14:00 | 14:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1301.2 | 8:30AM | 9:00AM | Tues/Fri | 1209 | 15:00 | 15:15 | Daily |
| 1303 | 3:30PM | 4:00PM | Tues/Fri | 1210 | 16:00 | 16:15 | Daily |
| ROTA TO SAIPAN | | | | 1211 | 17:00 | 17:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY | 1212 | 18:00 | 18:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 3101.2 | 9:30AM | 10:00AM | Tues/Fri | | | | |
| 3103 | 4:30PM | 5:00PM | Tues/Fri | | | | |
| ROTA TO GUAM | | | | TINIAN TO SAIPAN | | | |
| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY | FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
| 3401 | 12:15 | 12:45 | Temporarily Unavailable | 2101 | 7:30 | 7:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| GUAM TO ROTA | | | | 2102 | 8:30 | 8:45 | Daily |
| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY | 2103 | 9:30 | 9:45 | Daily |
| 4301 | 13:00 | 13:30 | Temporarily Unavailable | 2104 | 10:30 | 10:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| SAIPAN TO TINIAN | | | | 2105 | 11:30 | 11:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY | 2106 | 12:30 | 12:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1201 | 7:00 | 7:15 | Temporarily Unavailable | 2107 | 13:30 | 13:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1202 | 8:00 | 8:15 | Daily | 2108 | 14:30 | 14:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1203 | 9:00 | 9:15 | Daily | 2109 | 15:30 | 15:45 | Daily |
| 1204 | 10:00 | 10:15 | Temporarily Unavailable | 2110 | 16:30 | 16:45 | Daily |
| 1205 | 11:00 | 11:15 | Temporarily Unavailable | 2111 | 17:30 | 17:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1206 | 12:00 | 12:15 | Temporarily Unavailable | 2112 | 18:30 | 18:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

NEWS DESK

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Business

KOKI CATALPA:
A way of life

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

An online boutique store called Koki Catalpa, which its owner describes as, in essence, a “way of life,” recently opened on Saipan, with product pickups in Dandan.

“We always believe that good quality of life has nothing to do with price. ...Koki Catalpa continuously strives to select products that break the barriers that exquisite products must be expensive. ...Koki Catalpa makes it more stylish, more reliable, and more affordable,” according to owner Cindy Wu.

Koki Catalpa is an online shop that provides local service that allows people on island to skip shopping on eBay or Amazon. “It’s always better to shop local. First, it saves time. Second, it shortens the shopping process. After searching our website for the product you want, you can simply complete the shopping experience with a few clicks of the mouse button. Then you



For more information, call 783-5318

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS
Customers can pick up their items at Koki Catalpa near Dandan Bakery along Dandan Road between 9:30am and 5pm daily.

can pick it up the next day. Because online products are shipped directly to us, there is no shipping fee involved in the transaction process. Often you can get the product faster than any other online

store,” said Wu. Some of the unique items found at Koki Catalpa’s online store are household items, stationery, toys, decorations, and clothing for adults and children, etc.



Koki Catalpa's school bag.

“We import our items from different parts of China. We focus on the precision and refinement of products. So, usually we don’t duplicate items and, once they are sold out, generally there will be no replenishment. In other words they are unique. I combine my passion and love for this island [in running the store], as I was born and raised here, so I thought it was the perfect opportunity for me to start here,” said Wu.

Starting a business in a small market like Saipan is always a risk, but opening at a time of the COVID-19 pandemic, some would say, is just asking for trouble. Wu, however, is unfazed. “It seems like a crazy time to start a business

at this time. I know it isn’t going to be easy. Choosing to open a store during the pandemic is mainly to facilitate everyone’s convenience and shopping,” she said.

So far, so good, as Koki Catalpa has been welcomed with open arms by the community in its first few days of operations. “...I am pleased with the progress, since this is just Day 2 of our opening.”

Currently, Koki Catalpa has an opening day promotion where T-shirts for children and adult are discounted at \$3 and \$6, respectively.

Those interested in shopping online can find Koki Catalpa at <https://cnmikokicatalpa.onlineweb.shop/>. They can also be reached through their Facebook page with the same name.

Customers can pick up their items at Koki Catalpa near Dandan Bakery along Dandan Road between 9:30am and 5pm daily.

For more information, call 783-5318 or message them on their Facebook page.



Koki Catalpa's student stationary set.

GOP splits as virus aid package could swell past \$1T

WASHINGTON (AP)—The price tag for the next COVID-19 aid package could quickly swell above \$1 trillion as White House officials negotiate with Congress over money to reopen schools, prop up small businesses, boost virus testing and keep cash flowing to Americans while the virus crisis deepens in the U.S.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Tuesday promised a new round of direct payments to earners below a certain income level, similar to the \$1,200 checks sent in the spring. President Donald Trump insists on a payroll tax holiday for workers. And Democrats want

billions to outfit schools and shore up local governments.

“Regretfully, this is not over,” McConnell said after a raucous private GOP lunch, urging Americans to learn to live with the new virus by wearing masks and practicing social distancing until a vaccine can be found.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and acting chief of staff Mark Meadows spent the day on Capitol Hill, meeting separately with McConnell, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and others trying to broker a compromise between the GOP’s emerging \$1 trillion proposal with the House’s more sweeping \$3 trillion bill.

The lunch session grew heated as key Republican senators complained about big spending, vowing to stall the relief bill’s passage.

Supporters of the package “should be ashamed of themselves,” Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky said as he emerged.

Paul compared GOP backers of the spending to “Bernie bros” — referring to the young supporters of Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont. “This is insane. ... There’s no difference now between the two parties.”

As a long line of senators rose to speak about aspects of the bill, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz asked his colleagues, “What in the hell are we doing?”

US sanctions Chinese companies over Muslim abuse complaints

BEIJING (AP)—China said Tuesday it would take unspecified “necessary measures” after the U.S. government imposed trade sanctions on 11 companies it says are implicated in human rights abuses in China’s Muslim northwestern region of Xinjiang.

The sanctions add to U.S. pressure on Beijing over Xinjiang, where the ruling Communist Party is accused of mass detentions, forced labor, forced birth control and other abuses against Muslim minorities. Xinjiang is among a series of conflicts including human rights, trade and technology that have caused U.S.-Chinese relations to plunge to their lowest level in decades.

The Trump administration also has imposed sanctions on four Chinese officials over the accusations. Beijing responded

by announcing unspecified penalties on four U.S. senators who are critics of its human rights record.

Three of the companies cited Monday were identified by investigations by The Associated Press in 2018 and 2020 as being implicated in forced labor. One company, Nanchang O-Film Tech, supplies screens and lenses to Apple, Samsung and other technology companies. AP reporters found employees from Xinjiang at its factory in the southern city of Nanchang weren’t allowed out unaccompanied and were required to attend political classes.

U.S. customs authorities seized a shipment from the second company, Hetian Hao-lin Hair Accessories, on suspicion it was made by forced labor. People who worked for

the third, Hetian Taida, which produces sportswear sold to U.S. universities and sports teams, told AP detainees were compelled to work there.

The Department of Commerce said the addition of the 11 companies to its Entity List will limit their access to U.S. goods and technology. It gave no details of what goods might be affected.

“This action will ensure that our goods and technologies are not used in the Chinese Communist Party’s despicable offensive against defenseless Muslim minority populations,” said Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross in a statement.

The Chinese foreign ministry rejected the sanctions as interference in its affairs and an attempt by Washington to hurt Chinese companies.



| LEADING INDICATORS | | |
|---|---|---|
| S&P 3,250.75 -0.50 -0.02% | DOW 26,739.00 +13.00 +0.05% | NASDAQ 10,854.25 +3.25 +0.03% |

| EXCHANGE RATES | | Hong Kong Dollar | | 7.75 | Russian Ruble | | 69.82 |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------|------------------|----------|-------|
| In U.S. dollar terms | Australian Dollar | 1.40 | Indian Rupee | 74.35 | Singapore Dollar | 1.38 | |
| | British Pound | 0.79 | Japanese Yen | 106.85 | South Korean Won | 1,171.09 | |
| | Canadian Dollar | 1.34 | Malaysian Ringgit | 4.22 | Swiss Franc | 0.93 | |
| | Chinese Yuan | 6.88 | New Zealand Dollar | 1.50 | Taiwan Dollar | 28.95 | |
| | Euro | 0.87 | Philippine Peso | 48.52 | Thailand Baht | 31.59 | |
| | | | | | | | |

Nation

Heavily armed US agents on city streets: Can Trump do that?

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Trump administration has deployed agents with tactical gear to confront protesters in downtown Portland, Oregon. That has sparked debate over the use of federal power as local and state officials, and many in the community, condemn their tactics and demand they leave. Far from backing down, the administration plans to send agents to Chicago to respond to gun violence. And President Donald Trump says federal agents could be deployed elsewhere as he makes law and order a central element in his struggling re-election campaign.

Some of the issues behind this unconventional, if not unprecedented, use of federal forces:

WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN PORTLAND?

Protests over the killing of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis have taken place in downtown Portland for more than 50 consecutive days, drawing at times more than 10,000 mostly peaceful demonstrators. A relatively small number of activists have vandalized downtown buildings, including the federal courthouse, and attacked police and federal agents.

Trump issued an executive order June 26 to protect monuments and federal property after protesters tried to remove or destroy statues of people considered racist, including a failed attempt to pull down



AP
Federal officers use crowd control munitions to disperse Black Lives Matter protesters outside the Mark O. Hatfield United States Courthouse on Tuesday, July 21, 2020, in Portland, Ore.

one of Andrew Jackson near the White House. The Department of Homeland Security dispatched agents to Portland as well as Seattle and Washington, D.C., starting around the Fourth of July weekend.

WHY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY?

DHS, which was formed after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks to improve the nation's response to the threat of international terrorism, oversees some of the largest U.S. law enforcement agencies. That includes the Border Patrol as well as

Immigration Customs and Enforcement, which are seeing less of their usual activity because of COVID-19. DHS also oversees the Federal Protective Service, which guards federal buildings along with the U.S. Marshals Service. DHS sent members of the Border Patrol, along with Secret Service officers, Air Marshals and others, to Portland to protect the downtown courthouse complex.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER FEDERAL FORCES ARRIVED?

Federal officers and protesters

clashed in the streets outside the federal courthouse. Demonstrators broke windows and did other damage, hurled rocks at the officers and shined lasers in their eyes. Agents have fired tear gas to disperse demonstrators and arrested about 43 people since July 4, mostly for minor offenses. Tensions escalated after an officer with the Marshals Service fired a less-lethal round at

a protester's head on July 11, critically injuring him. They ratcheted up further when agents in unmarked vehicles with generic "police" patches on their camouflage uniforms arrested people at night without identifying themselves.

DHS officials defended the arrests Tuesday, saying they were carried out lawfully and intended to protect officers from violent crowds. They also

noted it is routine to use unmarked vehicles. But it seemed to many like the U.S. had created a secret police force, and it drew lawsuits as well as more protesters into the streets.

IS IT LEGAL FOR FEDERAL FORCES TO BE USED LIKE THIS?

Yes, to a certain extent. Federal authorities can enforce federal laws on federal property, like the courthouse in downtown Portland. But state and local officials say the federal agents have operated beyond their jurisdiction, and that has raised constitutional issues now being challenged in court. As Michael Dorf, a professional of constitutional law at Cornell University, told The Associated Press, "The idea that there's a threat to a federal courthouse and the federal authorities are going to swoop in and do whatever they want to do without any cooperation and coordination with state and local authorities is extraordinary outside the context of a civil war."

Ohio House speaker, 4 others arrested in \$60M bribery case

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—The powerful Republican speaker of the Ohio House and four associates were arrested Tuesday in a \$60 million federal bribery case connected to a taxpayer-funded bailout of Ohio's two nuclear power plants.

Hours after FBI agents raided Speaker Larry Householder's farm, U.S. Attorney David DeVillers described the ploy as likely the largest bribery and money-laundering scheme that had "ever been perpetrated against the people of the state of Ohio."

Gov. Mike DeWine, also a Republican, called on Householder to resign immediately, saying it would be impossible for him to be an effective legislative leader given the charges against him. The head of the Ohio Republican Party, the state attorney general and the Senate president also urged Householder to step down. The leaders of the House Republican Caucus called the allegations shocking but stopped short of asking Householder to resign.

Householder was one of the driving forces behind the nuclear plants' financial rescue, which added a new fee to every electricity bill in the state and directed over \$150 million a

year through 2026 to the plants near Cleveland and Toledo.

Also arrested were Householder adviser Jeffrey Longstreth, longtime Statehouse lobbyist Neil Clark,

former Ohio Republican Party Chairman Matthew Borges and Juan Cespedes, co-founder of The Oxley Group, a Columbus-based consulting firm.

Previous attempts to bail out the nuclear plants had stalled in the Legislature before Householder became speaker. Months after taking over, he rolled out a new plan to subsidize the plants and eliminate renewable energy incentives. The proposal was approved a year ago despite opposition from many business leaders and the manufacturing industry.

Investigators said Householder controlled Generation Now, a group that received \$60 million from an unidentified company over the past three years. In exchange, Householder and the other defendants worked to pass the nuclear plant bailout and block attempts to overturn it, according to a criminal complaint filed by the FBI.



Householder

The group was charged as a corporation in the case.

Householder and the others used the money to preserve and expand his political power, the complaint said. Almost \$100,000 was used

for Householder's 2018 campaign, and more than \$100,000 paid costs at the speaker's Florida home, according to the complaint.

The amounts increased once the legislation was introduced, and after it was signed into law, roughly \$38 million was wired into Generation Now accounts to defeat an effort to put a repeal of the bailout law on Ohio's ballot, the complaint said.

A former spokesman for the effort declined to comment.

One of the defendants said the money was "unlimited," while another referred to it as "Monopoly money."

All of the defendants made brief appearances at a federal court hearing in Columbus. A magistrate judge released them on their own recognizance, with travel restrictions and orders to give up any weapons and their passports.

Trump says virus in US will get worse before it gets better

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump warned on Tuesday that the "nasty horrible" coronavirus will get worse in the U.S. before it gets better, but he also tried to paint a rosy picture of efforts to conquer the disease that has claimed more than 140,000 American lives in just five months.

He also professed a newfound respect for the protective face masks he has seldom worn. He pulled one from his pocket in the White House briefing room but didn't put it on.

After a three-month hiatus from his freewheeling daily virus briefings, Trump returned to the podium, keeping the stage to himself without the public health experts who were staples of his previous events but keeping close to scripted remarks prepared by aides.

Besides declaring support for masks as a way to fight

the pandemic, he admonished young people against crowding bars and spreading the disease.

It all marked a delayed recognition by Trump that the economic reopening he's been championing since April—and, more importantly, his re-election—were imperiled by spiking cases nationwide.

There were no guarantees how long Trump's more measured tone, delivered with an eye to halting a campaign-season erosion of support, would last. Along the way Tuesday, the president still worked in jabs at the news media and Democrats for focusing on disease-fighting shortcomings in the U.S. as the rest of world also struggles with the virus. He also belatedly addressed bipartisan criticism of virus-testing delays that have hampered reopening plans.

"It will probably unfor-

tunately get worse before it gets better," Trump said from the White House. But he also touted a reduction in deaths and progress on vaccines and treatments for COVID-19, which he referred to repeatedly as a the "China virus." He continued his recent encouragement of Americans to wear masks when social distancing is not possible.

"Whether you like the mask or not, they have an impact," he said. "I'm getting used to the mask," he added, pulling one out after months of suggesting that mask-wearing was a political statement against him.

Swaths of the country are now battling rising infections and growing deaths, and some states are once again having to close businesses and rethink school in the fall. Many retailers themselves are insisting their customers don masks.

Asia

Esper: US considering troop 'adjustments' in South Korea

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Pentagon is considering “adjustments” to its military presence in South Korea and around the globe as it shifts from years of countering insurgencies and militants in the greater Middle East to focusing on China, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Tuesday.

Esper said he has issued no order to withdraw from South Korea.

Without discussing specifics, Esper said he favors more emphasis on rotational deployments, as opposed to permanent stationing, of American troops “because it gives us, the United States, greater strategic flexibility in terms of responding to challenges around the globe.”

Esper’s chief spokesman, Jonathan Hoffman, said later the goal of shifting to more use of rotational forces in Asia and Europe would be to “remove some of the footprint of having forces forward deployed” and allow troops to train in additional locations, “instead of being in one country all the time.” He said it also would allow the U.S. to be “a little bit more unpredictable.”

The U.S. has about 28,500 troops stationed in South Korea as a bulwark against North Korea, but the U.S.-South Korea treaty alliance is under great strain, mainly because of the Trump administration’s demand that Seoul vastly increase the amount it pays for the U.S. presence. Negotiations led on the U.S. side by the State Department have been deadlocked for months.

The Pentagon said Esper spoke by phone Monday with his South Korean counterpart to discuss the payment issue and other matters, including the stalemated U.S. effort to



Defense Secretary Mark Esper testifies during a House Armed Services Committee hearing on Thursday, July 9, 2020, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

rid North Korea of its nuclear weapons. It gave no details.

President Donald Trump has questioned the value of stationing U.S. troops in South Korea and elsewhere in the world, saying Seoul and other host governments must pay more of the cost.

In his remarks in a webinar hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, Esper said that since taking office a year ago he has sought to review the global U.S. military footprint with an eye to competing more effectively with China and Russia. That has included looking for ways to bring more U.S. troops home so that they can train more directly for missions related to potential conflict in the Asia-Pacific region.

Esper said he hopes to visit China this year to “enhance cooperation on areas of common interest,” improve crisis communications systems, and “reinforce our intentions to openly compete in the interna-

tional system in which we all belong.” Hoffman, his spokesman, said the matter is under discussion and he was not sure whether Esper has talked to his Chinese counterpart about the timing.

Earlier this month Esper approved the withdrawal of 9,500 troops from Germany, although he has yet to publicly disclose how many of those will be brought home and how many will be shifted to other parts of Europe or elsewhere. He also has reviewed the U.S. presence in Africa.

“We will continue to look at adjustments in every command we have, in every theater, to make sure we are optimizing our forces,” Esper said in Tuesday’s webinar.

The U.S. military presence in South Korea dates to the 1950-53 Korean War in which American forces fought in support of the South after North Korean troops invaded and were later supported by Chinese troops.

muzzle dissent.

Last month, a Manila court found Ressa and a former Rappler reporter guilty of libeling a wealthy businessman. Ressa was sentenced to up to six years but her lawyer said the prison terms and other penalties imposed could not be enforced unless all appeals were rejected.

Duterte and other Philippine officials have said the criminal complaints against Ressa and Rappler were not a press freedom issue but part of judicial procedures arising from their alleged violations of the law.

Filipino journalist Ressa pleads not guilty to tax evasion

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Award-winning Philippine journalist Maria Ressa, who was last month convicted of libel in what was widely criticized as an attack on press freedom, on Wednesday pleaded not guilty to tax evasion, one of several other cases she and her online news site are facing.

Ressa, who heads Rappler Inc., told reporters outside a Manila court that “we have to hold the line every step of the way,” referring to her defense.

She said she pleaded not guilty during her arraignment

on a charge of tax code violation related to Rappler’s VAT return for the 2nd quarter of 2015. In April 2019, Ressa pleaded not guilty to four other tax violation charges before the Court of Tax Appeals, which consisted of one count of tax evasion and three counts of failure to supply correct tax information.

Ressa, who worked for CNN and was one of Time magazine’s Persons of the Year in 2018, has accused the government of President Rodrigo Duterte of abusing its power and using the law to

World

Report: UK officials ‘avoided’ looking into Russian meddling

LONDON (AP)—A long-awaited report on Russian meddling in British politics criticized the U.K. government for failing to investigate whether Moscow interfered in the 2016 Brexit referendum, with the document’s authors describing the lack of curiosity about this threat to democracy as a major failure at the heart of power.

The report from Parliament’s Intelligence and Security Committee also painted a damning portrait of Russian involvement in British society more generally, including attempts to influence government policy by wealthy Russians with ties to President Vladimir Putin and the British financiers who help them.

Stewart Hosie, a committee member and member of Parliament for the opposition Scottish National Party, accused the government of “actively avoiding” allegations of Russian meddling, which he said was unforgivable after evidence emerged that Moscow had interfered with the Scottish independence referendum in 2014 and the U.S. presidential election two years later. The panel called for the government to appoint a commission to look into the issue and report back to the public.

“There has been no assessment of Russian interference in the EU referendum and this goes back to nobody wanting to touch the issue with a 10-foot pole,” Hosie said during a press conference after the report was delivered to Parliament.

The government stalled publication of the report for more than seven months, with the main opposition Labour Party suggesting that Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his Conservative Party were trying to avoid further questions about links between Russia and the pro-Brexit campaign. Johnson helped lead the campaign for Britain to leave the European Union and has made delivering Brexit his primary goal since he became prime minister last July.

Committee members said Russia’s goal in seeking to influence elections was to amplify existing divisions, and thus destabilize Western political systems. While the report said it would be “difficult—if not impossible—to prove” whether Russian meddling influenced the result of the EU referendum, it was clear that the government “was slow to recognize the existence of the threat.”

The report concludes that Russia sees Britain as one of its top intelligence targets, adding that Moscow’s attempts to influence the U.K. are the “new normal” and successive governments have welcomed Russian oligarchs with open arms. Russians with “very close links” to Putin are “well integrated into the U.K. business, political and social scene—in ‘Londongrad’ in particular,” the report said.

In a 20-page response, the government denied that it had “badly underestimated” the Russian threat and rejected the call for a commis-

sion to investigate alleged Russian meddling during the Brexit referendum.

“We have seen no evidence of successful interference in the EU Referendum,” the statement said.

But it may prove difficult for Johnson to avoid a further inquiry because the committee’s recommendation is non-partisan and has the weight of Parliament behind it, according to Nigel Gould-Davies, senior fellow for Russia and Eurasia at the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

“This is a national security issue,” he said. “The report is very clear that it’s probably impossible to assess whether Russian operations made a difference or not. But I think everyone with a concern about British national security can share the view that it’s important to understand the extent and seriousness of that attempt in order, among other things, to make sure that such attempts are not successful in the future.”

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova dismissed the committee’s findings, calling them “Russophobia.”

The report’s authors said they were subjected to unprecedented delays in making the document public, with officials stalling its release for more than seven months after it was first submitted to Johnson on Oct. 17. The committee didn’t offer a theory about why the report was delayed, but claimed the government’s explanations were not true.

Cyprus: Virus-infected migrants may be crossing into south

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP)—Asylum-seekers infected with coronavirus could be seeping through the porous cease-fire line in the ethnically divided Mediterranean island of Cyprus, the country’s health minister warned Sunday.

Minister Constantinos Ioannou pointed to “a problem” after a number of migrants who recently crossed from the breakaway north to seek asylum in the internationally recognized south have tested positive for COVID-19.

Ioannou said the government had ordered two months ago that all migrants undergo testing for COVID-19 before they enter reception centers. At least eight Syrian migrants

who crossed southward in the last week have reportedly tested positive.

Ioannou said coronavirus checks are being conducted at several crossing points that dot the 180-kilometer (120-mile), U.N.-controlled buffer zone. But migrants seek other, more remote routes to cross into the south, which is part of the European Union.

The crossing points opened late last month after being shut down for three months due to coronavirus restrictions. However, the Cypriot government still bans crossings of foreigners because of uncertainty over the virus infection rate in the north. In the south, Cyprus has seen

over 1,000 infections and 19 confirmed virus deaths.

“The virus is still here, we haven’t gotten rid of it as many think and if we don’t take protective measures then we may have a problem in the future,” Ioannou said.

Cyprus was split in 1974 when Turkey invaded after a coup aimed at union with Greece. Only Turkey recognizes a Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence in the north. The nation joined the EU in 2004, but only Greek Cypriots and others in the south enjoy full membership.

More than three quarters of the migrants who sought asylum in southern Cyprus crossed over from the north.

Environment

TNS

Least terns share a fish near their nest in Deerfield Beach on Wednesday, July 15, 2020. A large section of the beach has been closed off due to the formation of a colony by the seabirds.



When the beach was off-limits to humans, a rare colony of seabirds found a place to nest

By RAMISHAH MARUF
SUN SENTINEL

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla.—When the humans left, the seabirds flocked home.

A rare colony of least terns, a threatened, federally protected seabird, landed on Deerfield Beach in March, when humans did not have access to the sand. This is the first south-east Florida nesting colony in decades and will probably be the last for years to come.

The least tern form colonies on empty beaches, which in populated Broward County is a rare find.

“We have pushed them off,” said Ann Wiley, who since late April has been guarding the colony. “We have crowded them out. And as soon as we backed off, they returned.”

Wiley, a volunteer with the Florida Shorebird Alliance, became the lead organizer to protect the colony after it was discovered by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Even from the sidewalk during lockdown, Wiley said she felt like she was watching them in their natural habitat, at the kind of beaches you’d find on the secluded islands off the west coast of Florida.

The least tern population has decreased by 88% over the last 40 years. That is due to the commercialization of beaches much like Deerfield, where

the dune vegetation used for shade has been ripped out.

Least terns are fishermen, and this colony was probably attracted to the bait fish off Deerfield Beach’s pier. They’re also the smallest of their kind, their chicks the size of cotton balls when they hatch.

At any one time, about 50 birds are nesting. Wiley believes the colony will stay in Deerfield until late July or early August before all the birds have migrated to South America.

For almost two months, the birds had the beach to themselves.

When the beaches reopened in late May and the normal crowds returned, Wiley formed a team of volunteers to patrol the colony every day from 6 a.m. to midnight. Wiley is there herself almost every day — the lifeguards know her as “the bird lady.”

Wiley marked off the colony with pink flagging tape and placed wooden pallets to protect the terns from the sun.

There are more than 20 volunteers, many of them members of local Audubon societies. Nancy Freeman travels all the way from Jupiter.

Freeman points out a flock of them returning from the shore to feed their young, looking like small paper airplanes in the sky. Their chicks, light brown like the sand, wait for them under the limestone rock.

“I’ve never seen them like this,” Freeman said. “To be able to watch their behavior and how they interact.”

Freeman’s shift lasts 2.5 hours. She looks for suspicious footprints that could have stepped inside the colony. Or for any volleyballs being thrown around — one wrong serve could crush an egg. Visitors ask her why such a large portion of the beach is blocked off by pink tape.

Rosa Rivera and Jaime Plana, from Boca Raton, aren’t bird-watchers but ran into the colony in May. They quickly became some of its most dedicated stewards—volunteering every evening, five days a week.

“This has never happened, so why not dedicate a little time just to see them procreating and going back home?” said Rivera.

Rivera wears a shirt with a picture of the birds and a hat with the name spelled out, so it makes it easier for visitors to understand. She knows the birds’ personalities now, from bullying teenagers to struggling lovers.

“The male bird tried to mate with the female and he didn’t even have a fish to give her!” said Rivera. “Just like a typical guy.”

And like a mother protecting her eggs, Rivera is defensive over the colony and won’t let any beachgoers disturb their peace. Wiley said four of



A sign alerts beachgoers to be aware of federally protected least terns, which are nesting in Deerfield Beach, July 14, 2020. A large section of the beach has been closed off due to the formation of a colony by the seabirds.

the chicks have been crushed to death by people walking over them.

She’s already had to stop people from stepping into the colony, including a man who was so startled he became tangled up in the pink tape surrounding the border.

“This big bodybuilder-type man was there with his wife and grandchildren and he started screaming at him,” Rivera said. “The (intruder) got so scared he fell.”

Wiley said the majority of beachgoers are respectful of

the colony, and is a major reason why it has survived even after the beaches opened up. There was a fear that when the humans returned, the adults would abandon their chicks.

“When they were flying over Deerfield they must have felt the vibes of the beach,” Wiley said.

On July 7, the least tern became the official city bird of Deerfield Beach. Though they will probably never return, City Commissioner Michael Hudack sees the birds as a way to tie everything together: CO-

VID-19, the benefits of isolation and the impact humans have on the environment.

Hudack encourages Deerfield Beach residents to observe the colony before they’re gone.

By late July, most of the birds will have departed for their winter home in South America. Hundreds have left already with their young.

“Like the deer, least terns previously made Deerfield Beach their home,” Hudack said. “And now they’ve returned.”

Life & Style

Amber Heard

says **Depp** tried to throw her sister down stairs

LONDON (AP)— Amber Heard dismissed accusations Tuesday that she fabricated allegations of domestic violence against ex-husband Johnny

Depp, and told a British court that the first time she struck him after years of abuse was to defend her sister from being thrown down the stairs.

Taking to the witness box for a second day during Depp's libel case against a British tabloid at the High Court in London, the actress faced a barrage of questions over alleged incidents that are central to The Sun's labeling of Depp in an April 2018 article as a "wife beater."

She also admitted striking Depp for the first time in March 2015, after years of alleged abuse, to defend her sister, Whitney. When asked whether she had punched Depp "with a closed fist," Heard conceded she had struck him after he had hit both of them.

"He was about to push her down the stairs and the moment before that happened, I remembered information I had heard that he pushed a former girlfriend— I believe it was Kate Moss— down the stairs," she said. Depp dated the top model in the 1990s.

"I will never forget this incident," she said. "It was the first time after all these years."

Depp's counsel, Eleanor Laws, wondered why Heard had not mentioned the Moss allegation previously.

"I've not had the liberty of time or space or energy even to list every thought that crossed my mind," Heard said.

Depp, 57, is suing The Sun's publisher, News Group Newspapers, and the paper's executive editor, Dan Wootton, over the article. The Hol-



Amber Heard arrives at the High Court, in London, Monday, July 20, 2020. AP

lywood star strongly denies abusing Heard, and claimed in court that she had been violent to him. He was present to hear Heard's testimony.

His lawyer sought to show inconsistencies in Heard's allegations, accusing her of weaving a "web of lies" and "making this up as you go along."

Heard, 34, insisted through the day that she was being truthful.

"I can just tell you after everything I had been through; I had been strangled, punched,

"like he was a baseball pitcher," hitting her on the right cheek and eye. She said she wears makeup when leaving home that could have camouflaged signs of an injury.

Heard also denied she had an "illicit relationship" with anyone during her time with Depp, specifically with either Tesla CEO Elon Musk or actor James Franco. "Not that that matters much," Heard said.

Laws read out text messages on May 22, 2016, in which Heard allegedly tells Musk she is going to obtain a restraining order against Depp, and the billionaire offers to "arrange 24/7 security." Musk allegedly said the offer would stand, "even if you never wanted to see me again ... anyway, sorry for being an idiot. The radio silence hurts a lot. It only matters because I really like you."

Depp and Heard met on the set of the comedy "The Rum Diary," released in 2011. They married in Los Angeles in February 2015. Heard filed for divorce the following year, and it was finalized in 2017.

In the first nine days of testimony at the High Court, judge Andrew Nicol heard from Depp and from several current or former employees who backed his version of events. In his testimony, Depp said he was the one being abused by Heard and that she had a history of being violent against him.

Via audio recordings of the couple discussing various incidents played in court, Depp's lawyer sought to show that Heard admitted she had been violent against Depp. Heard said any contact was purely self-defense.

Rachel Maddow and Mary Trump make formidable TV combination

NEW YORK (AP)—Not only can President Donald Trump's niece Mary sell books, she can draw a crowd on television.

Her one-hour interview with Rachel Maddow last Thursday reached 5.2 million people, the biggest audience ever for one of Maddow's shows and largest ever for a regularly-scheduled show on MSNBC, the Nielsen company said.

That's not bad for July, when television audiences are generally the smallest of the year.

Mary Trump's book, "Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man," approached 1 million units sold on pre-orders alone. First-week sales figures are due later this week.

Mary Trump also drew a crowd to CNN on Friday, where she was interviewed by Chris Cuomo during the 8 and 9 p.m. Eastern hours,

though not to the level as Maddow's audience. Cuomo's first-hour audience of 2.19 million was up 28% from the year's average,

while the second hour's 2.66 million was up 39%, Nielsen said.

CBS won the week in prime time, averaging 3.2 million viewers. NBC had 3 million, ABC had 2.8 million, Univision had 1.4 million, Fox had 1.3 million, ION Television reached 1.1 million and Telemundo had 820,000.

Fox News Channel led the cable networks with an average of 2.94 million viewers in prime time. MSNBC was second with 2.03 million, CNN had 1.59 million, HGTV had 1.29 million and TLC had 1.26 million.

ABC's "World News Tonight" led the evening news networks with an average of 8.9 million viewers. NBC's "Nightly News" had 7.6 million and the "CBS Evening News" had 5.2 million.



Maddow

New relationship founders on sharing of offensive video

DEAR ABBY: A casual friend sent me a video of a comic doing a very lewd and vulgar routine. I was offended by it and forwarded it to my girlfriend to find out what she thought about it. She got very upset and told me I was being disrespectful to her by even passing it on to her. I should add that we met online and have been talking on the phone with each other for only a month during this shelter-in-place time.

This incident nearly ended our new relationship. Was I wrong to send her the video? And what should I do now to save what I think is the most wonderful relationship I have ever had in my life?

NO LAUGHING MATTER

DEAR NO LAUGHING: Before sending the video, you should have warned your new girlfriend that it was vulgar and asked if she wanted to see it, which would have given her the opportunity to refuse. What you should do now is apologize for having offended her and tell her how much you value your relationship with her. Then cross your fingers that she still feels the same.

DEAR ABBY: My wife had some health issues over the last four years and gained 40 pounds. She keeps saying she wants to lose the weight, but doesn't do anything about it. Her blood pressure is high, so she needs to do it. When I try to bring it up,

she gets mad and always mentions the health issues. But those issues are now totally behind her. What can I do or say to get her going again?

FULL OF CONCERN IN NEW JERSEY

DEAR FULL: Tell your wife you don't mean to come across as a nag, but you are worried because of her blood pressure issue. She is far from the only person who procrastinates when faced with changing one's lifestyle.

Many folks are overindulging now because of the challenge of social isolation. Something that might benefit you both would be to encourage her to get out and start walking with you on a regular basis. And drop the subject of weight for now. Take it up again once your lives begin to normalize and she may be less defensive.

DEAR ABBY: My college-age daughter, "Dahlia," refuses to take seriously the social distancing necessary to control the spread of COVID-19, even though her college, like many others, has closed. She says it's all overblown, even though her father and I are older and she has a pregnant sister at home.

Dahlia is young, and she thinks she's invincible. I think my daughter is selfish for not caring about anyone else. What can I say to her?

FOLLOWING THE RULES IN WEST VIRGINIA

DEAR ABBY

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR FOLLOWING: Many people still are having trouble accepting the fact that we are all at risk because of an invisible and silent "enemy," COVID-19. Because you are unable to get through to Dahlia, assert yourself as the adult in the household and establish some rules to protect yourself, your husband, your pregnant daughter and your unborn grandchild. First among them: Dahlia must follow the government guidelines regarding social distancing, handwashing, etc. or find another place to live.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

New look, whole new NBA game experience



LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (AP)—

There's no bench. The court-side broadcasters will not be court-side. And the stat crew will be doing their work inside what loosely can be described as an oversized hockey penalty box.

The NBA comes back Wednesday with a very different look.

The league's marketing motto for the restart of the season at Walt Disney World is "Whole New Game," and in many respects, that's very true. The arenas that will be used for the exhibitions, the seeding games that start July 30 and then the playoffs that are scheduled for mid-August through mid-October set up much differently than usual—all with safety during a pandemic very much in mind.

Los Angeles Clippers coach Doc Rivers said league officials have been great, "they really have been. They've done everything right as far as I'm concerned."

"I mean, when you think that we're running a village for the first time, the league is doing pretty well in city management."

The court dimensions, of course, are unchanged.

Everything else about an NBA game setup is new.

Seating in the bench areas will be assigned, with folding chairs set up on three rows instead of the customary two and spaced out several feet from one another—instead of players sitting shoulder-to-shoulder as they have in the past. And across the center stripe, the words "Black Lives Matter" are painted onto the surface.

The area where the official scorers, timers and statisticians sit is enclosed by plexiglass, with social distancing in that makeshift room as well. Broadcasters, who are court-side in normal circumstances, will be higher up and several feet further back from the playing surface. Even the set-up for replay reviews will be different -- that monitor is in the corner of the arena, instead of being kept at the scorer's table and utilized when needed.

League officials hope they thought of every way to keep people apart and promote social distancing.

Some teams have gotten tours already; Denver center Nikola Jokic didn't get to see the arenas yet, but said Nuggets President Tim Connelly gave them good reviews.

"I didn't see it in person," Jokic said. "Tim told me it looks really nice. But to be honest, I've played in every possible arena. Nice, bad.



Cold, hot. Whatever."

The exhibitions that start on Wednesday will be glorified scrimmages, designed to help the teams, the referees and even the game-night workers figure out how everything works. Teams have even collaborated on their game plans, asking one another what they want to work on in these matchups that won't count for anything.

They won't even have a game feel: No national anthems will be played, no starter introductions will take place, warmups might not even happen like usual and some real-game elements might get tested out to see what works. The first scrimmages for each team will also have 10-minute quarters, as opposed to the usual 12.

"I've just got to take it one game at a time, see what it's like during these scrimmages," Clippers forward Kawhi Leonard said.

Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said he reached out to Utah's Quin Snyder and Sacramento's Luke Walton on how they wanted to make things work in their upcoming scrimmages, and other coaches have had similar conversations.

The Clippers play Orlando on Wednesday. Rivers said he knows exactly what Magic coach Steve Clifford will do in that scrimmage, and Orlando knows the Clippers' plans as well.

"We're looking at this as an opportunity to get better for both teams," Rivers said. "So, coaches are absolutely sharing things. We're asking them in this quarter can you do this, on-side, out-of-bounds, can you do this defense, then what do you want me to do? I think it's been great in that way."

Meanwhile, Bam Adebayo and Kendrick Nunn (excused absences) joined the Miami Heat at Disney on Tuesday, meaning all 17 players on that roster are now inside the bubble. Neither will play in Miami's exhibition opener Wednesday against Sacramento while satisfying quarantine requirements.

Sacramento announced Tuesday night that Marvin Bagley III will miss the rest of the season with a right foot sprain. It's the latest blow for the Kings, who still do not have Harrison Barnes with them at Disney while he deals with coronavirus.

A person with knowledge of the situation said Clippers guard Patrick Beverley left the bubble Tuesday to tend to a family matter. Beverley intends to return at some point, according to the person who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team did not announce anything publicly. ESPN first reported Beverley's departure. Beverley will have to serve a quarantine of at

least four days—and possibly longer—upon returning.

Garnett wants piece of Wolves

Kevin Garnett wants to come

back to Minnesota—as a Timberwolves owner.

The longtime NBA superstar said Tuesday he is part of a group that is hoping to buy the franchise from Glen

A basketball court is shown at the ESPN Wide World of Sports complex in Kissimmee, Fla., Tuesday, July 21, 2020.

Taylor, who has owned it since 1994.

Taylor said in a statement he was recently approached by a third-party group to discuss the future of the franchise. He said he's always wanted what's best for the team's fans and "will entertain opportunities" on the ownership structure of the Timberwolves and Lynx, Minnesota's WNBA team.

Taylor told The Athletic that interested buyers have been told that the franchise must stay in Minnesota, which doesn't appear to be a problem for Garnett.

He tweeted that "no two people love the city more than myself and Glen Taylor and I look forward to trying to work with him to achieve my dream."

ESPN reported that Vikings owners Zygi and Mark Wilf had emerged as serious candidates to buy the team. The Vikings declined comment.

Garnett spent his first 12 seasons in Minnesota, where he was voted NBA MVP in 2004 when the Wolves reached the Western Conference finals. But he was traded to Boston in 2007 and helped the Celtics win the championship the following year, while the Wolves became one of the league's worst franchises with only one playoff appearance since.

Jordan logo on Pistons jersey

DETROIT—For several years during the Bad Boys era, the Pistons seemed attached to Michael Jordan's jersey.

Now, his image will be attached to all the jerseys—including the Pistons—in the league, the team announced Tuesday. Beginning next season, all of the NBA's new Statement Edition jerseys will bear the Jordan Brand's Jumpman logo on the right shoulder of the tops and left leg of the shorts.

That includes the Pistons, who will have their light grey Statement jerseys that they debuted in 2017.

NBA teams' other jerseys already have a Nike swoosh logo on the right shoulder; the Jumpman logo will only be on the Statement Edition.

The Bulls-Pistons rivalry isn't news to the avid fans of either team. But the recent releases of Netflix's *The Last Dance* has put more fire to the already fierce and controversial feud as Jordan expressed his great dislike for Isiah Thomas and the "Bad

Boys". He points it to the latter's rough playing style on the court.

The fan reaction to the jersey issue proves that the dislike is not one-sided. Jordan's electric play-making and daring personality definitely clashed with the Pistons' ferocity—and this friction sparked the infamous and generations-worth of rivalry between the two franchises.

Jazz to honor Sloan

In Salt Lake City, the Utah Jazz will honor Hall of Fame coach Jerry Sloan by wearing a patch on their team jerseys and warmups when the NBA season restarts in Orlando, Florida.

The patch features the number "1223," which was the amount of total wins for Sloan in his 23 seasons as head coach of the Jazz. Sloan died in May of complications from Parkinson's disease and Lewy body dementia. He was 78.

The team will wear the patch for the first time Thursday in a preseason game against Phoenix.

"Coach Jerry Sloan will forever be in the hearts of the Utah Jazz organization and fans everywhere, and we feel it is only fitting to honor him in this way," said Greg Miller, a member of the NBA Board of Governors and director of the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies. "His contributions to our Jazz family and communities are a defining part of our franchise history and we look forward to seeing 1,223 on the jerseys of our players in Orlando as a nod to his legacy."

The team also plans to wear jerseys with a commemorative black strip and the same "1223" design next season. Other tributes will be announced later.

Sloan guided the Jazz to 16 straight winning seasons and 13 50-win campaigns. He coached 133 different players during his time as Utah's head coach.

He was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2009. (AP/NBC)

Distancing difficult around MLB plates



PHILADELPHIA (AP)—

Just like his strong arm and limber legs, Joe Girardi made good use of his mouth over 15 seasons as a big league catcher. So much so that slugger Chili Davis once told him to shut it.

"He was like, 'You're bothering me, I'm trying to hit,'" recalled Girardi, now manager of the Philadelphia Phillies. "I said, 'Well, I'm trying to bother you, Chili.'"

Girardi doesn't think that kind of chatter will happen as much this season amid the coronavirus pandemic.

There's some concern that home plate could become a hot spot for transmission as baseball attempts to play a shortened 60-game season starting Thursday.

Social distancing elsewhere around the diamond is fairly easy. But with the batter, catcher and umpire gathered within a few feet of each other around home plate, it might not be possible for all parties to follow government guidance to avoid 10 to 15 minutes of close exposure to others.

"It's been a little weird. Just from being back there for so long, you get used to having people around," Arizona Diamondbacks catcher Carson Kelly said. "But now you get some second thoughts. 'Oh wait, should I be this close to this guy?'" We've got a job to do but at the same time we need to be safe."

Like with so much in everyday life during the pandemic, the interactions at home—whether cordial exchanges or distracting chatter—will feel far from normal for the trio around that 17-inch wide plate.

"This is something everybody's talking about, everybody's trying to figure out," Texas Rangers catcher Robinson Chirinos said. "But in the end hopefully we can do our part and be safe at the plate,



Los Angeles Dodgers' Chris Taylor, right, hits a three-run home run as Los Angeles Angels pitcher Jaime Barria, left, watches along with catcher Max Stassi and home plate umpire D.J. Reyburn during the third inning of a preseason baseball game Tuesday, July 21, 2020, in Los Angeles.

because of having those three guys right there so close."

Chirinos plans to wear a face covering under his catcher's mask, but knows that it will have "to be on and off just because I still need to be vocal out there being a catcher," and make sure pitchers and fielders can hear and understand what he is saying.

Just by the nature of their responsibility to calls balls and strikes, umpires are directly behind catchers and peering over catchers' shoulders. Within that close contact it's not uncommon -- at least not in the past -- for umpires to put their hands on crouching catchers. There is also the back-and-forth talk between them at times about those calls, though that is rarely face-to-face.

Some plate umpires are expected to wear their own face coverings. In addition, umpires have been given plastic shields to go over the bottom of their masks. That could reduce contact and droplets, but there might be some concern about those shields fogging up.

About 10 Major League Baseball umpires have opted out of working games this season because of concerns about the coronavirus.

Umpires are being tested regularly for the coronavirus, like players, managers, coaches and other essential staff members have to be so they can be on the field.

Kurt Suzuki, catcher for the World Series champion Washington Nationals, said it would be "really tough" for him to

wear a medical mask when behind the plate, though he would like to do that.

"But we have good protocols, good testing. Everybody who's here shows up negative, so that's kind of where we're at right now," Suzuki said. "We're all in this together. We have to follow the rules if we want to make this work."

Even with all the testing, precautions and protocols, there will still be an uneasy feeling for some around home plate.

"In the big picture, I'm worried because if one gets it, everyone gets it. That's how the virus is. That's what gets me scared about it," Milwaukee Brewers catcher Omar Narvaez said. "Everyone knows the healthiest team is going to win. We're all going to try and

help each other stay healthy. Everybody knows it's a dangerous position we're in right now, but I'm trying not to think about it."

The New York Yankees have two players who say they'll wear masks at least some of the time around home plate—outfielder Clint Frazier and backup catcher Kyle Higashioka.

Frazier was among the first MLB players to declare he'd wear a face covering full-time, and he's been experimenting with different models to see what feels best in the batter's box.

"I'm just trying to show that it's easy to do and it's the right thing to do," Frazier said. "If it helps a little bit, it's not hard to do, so I'm going to try to do it as much as I can. Hopefully someone sees it and maybe

they do it, too."

Yankees manager Aaron Boone supports players wearing masks if they're comfortable doing it, but isn't mandating it. Neither is MLB—players must use face coverings elsewhere in the ballpark, but not during on-field activities.

Higashioka has settled on a lightweight gaiter covering that fits comfortably under his catcher's mask. He won't wear it while hitting because it restricts his ability to turn his head, but said "for catching, there's nothing that really bugs me about it."

"I'm kind of in close vicinity with a couple other people," he said. "Might as well just throw the face covering on just in case. Not sure if it'll help much, but anything works."

WASHINGTON (AP)—The hard-court tournament in the nation's capital that was supposed to mark the official return of men's professional tennis amid the pandemic was scrapped Tuesday—but the group in charge of the U.S. Open immediately said the tuneup's cancellation "in no way impacts" its Grand Slam event.

The Citi Open, scheduled to start with Aug. 13 qualifying, was called off because of what tournament manager Mark Ein said are "too many unresolved external issues, including various international travel restrictions as well as troubling health and safety trends."

The number of coronavirus cases has been spiking in spots throughout the United States.

Calling the cancellation of

ATP Tour won't start in DC; US Open still planned

the Washington tournament "disappointing," ATP Chairman Andrea Gaudenzi said: "Unfortunately for the moment, there are still large factors at play, which are outside of our control."

The men's and women's pro tours both have been suspended since March because of the COVID-19 outbreak and have been eyeing a return to action next month. The first event on the most recently announced version of the sport's 2020 slate is a women's clay-court tournament in Palermo, Italy, starting Aug. 3, and WTA spokeswoman Amy Binder said Tuesday that tour's "provisional calendar remains on course to proceed at this time."

"Our current approach to the season is to provide opportunities where possible irrespective of travel restrictions," Binder wrote in an email, "so that as many players that do have the ability and desire to travel can compete during this unique and difficult time."

As of now, the week of Aug. 10 includes women's tournaments in Lexington, Kentucky—where 23-time Grand Slam singles champion Serena Williams is among the announced entrants—and the Czech Republic. But no official men's competition.

With Washington's ATP stop, where Nick Kyrgios was the champion last year, now

gone, the first chance for men to play sanctioned matches will be the Masters-level event usually played in Cincinnati that was moved to the site of the U.S. Open in Flushing Meadows, starting Aug. 22.

That is to be followed by the U.S. Open, where main-draw play is due to begin Aug. 31 without any spectators. The next Grand Slam tournament will be the clay-court French Open, which postponed its start from late May to late September because of the pandemic.

After the ATP and Citi Open announced the decision to abandon plans to play this year, the U.S. Tennis Association put out a statement saying

it "understands the rationale" behind that cancellation.

The USTA's statement continued: "This decision in no way impacts the U.S. Open or the Western & Southern Open. The USTA will create a safe and controlled environment for players and everyone else involved in both tournaments that mitigates health risks."

A cautionary note was sounded for the USTA's grand plans for a "bubble" to keep players and others safe during its two-week Grand Slam tournament: An American tennis player, Danielle Collins, was kicked out of World Team Tennis for breaking the league's COVID-19 protocols.

WTT CEO Carlos Silva

said Collins, a 26-year-old who was a semifinalist at the 2019 Australian Open, left the resort hosting all of the matches during the league's three-week season and exited the state of West Virginia.

"The protocols have been put in place and communicated numerous times to protect the health and safety of our players, coaches and staff," Silva said.

Collins was playing for the Orlando Storm in WTT, which took all nine of its teams and put them in one place for the season that began July 12 and ends Aug. 2.

The WTT is not affiliated with the WTA or ATP professional tours, so it was able to hold its season while they were on hiatus.



NFL faces unending questions, uncertain answers



NEW YORK (AP)—In seven weeks, the NFL expects to kick off its 101st season with the Super Bowl champion Chiefs hosting Houston.

Emphasis on expects.

Still set on conducting a somewhat normal training camp, though without any pre-season games, and then opening the regular season on time, the NFL pushes onward.

Rookies are reporting to team facilities this week, nearly all of them for the first time. Veterans are set to come in next week, and after testing for COVID-19 and a lengthy acclimation period, practices should begin sometimes next month.

Of course, there are more questions than ever for America's most profitable sports league, most notably how to keep people safe in a contact sport during a pandemic.

"Everything that we're doing is centered around the concept of risk mitigation," says Dr. Allen Sills, the league's chief medical officer. "We know that we can't eliminate risk, but we're trying to mitigate it as much as possible for everyone. We know that this is going to be a shared responsibility."

Already this year the NFL has had to switch to remote, well, everything: free agency, the draft, offseason workouts, owners meetings. Now come the biggest and most critical tests as 80-man rosters attempt to stay healthy while preparing to play a game that requires close contact nearly all the time. Roster sizes were reduced from 90 under an agreement Tuesday between the league and the players' association, according to people familiar with the change who spoke to The Associated Press



In this Feb. 2, 2020 file photo, Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes (15) calls out a play during the first half of their game against the San Francisco 49ers in the NFL Super Bowl 54 in Miami Gardens, Fla.

on condition of anonymity because it has not been announced.

"We could have a ton of social distance, more than we have with our football team," Chiefs coach Andy Reid says. "It's all set up with monitors and everything else. Then the testing, these guys are going to be tested often. It'll be good that way. There's a responsibility for coaches and players to make sure we handle ourselves right when we're away from it. We are still keeping as much social distance as we can. It's a contact sport, but when there's no contact we're going to keep our distance."

The NFL has been studying the approaches of other

sports, seeing the success NASCAR and the PGA Tour have experienced with their traveling shows, and the many issues Major League Baseball has dealt with. But auto racing, golf and baseball don't involve close-quarters action from beginning to end.

Thus, the elimination of exhibition games, which went from four to an owners' proposal of two and then to none. The players' association, which also proposed no preseason contests, approved the league's offer on Tuesday, a person familiar with the decision told The AP. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the offer had not been made public.

Getting rid of the exhibitions is one of many steps that will cost owners millions, but a necessary one.

The business of pro football will take a major hit, with ramifications extending into next year and beyond, affecting salary caps and contract negotiations and, of course, bottom lines in a league that has \$15 billion in revenues. Or did.

Still, plenty of NFL business has taken place since mid-March, when the coronavirus led to nationwide shutdowns.

Tampa Bay Tom

In a normal year, Tom Brady's switch from the Patriots to the Buccaneers would have over-ridden every NFL story, from

early winter through the spring and summer and into his debut against fellow 40-something QB Drew Brees and the Saints in September.

Perhaps the biggest headlines Brady drew recently came when he defied players' union recommendations to cease informal practices with teammates as a coronavirus precaution.

Mahomes money

The Chiefs vowed they would pay star quarterback Patrick Mahomes, locking him up long term. Does 10 years for potentially \$500 million work? Yes, half a billion dollars.

Not that he is in Mahomes' class, but Dallas QB Dak

Prescott wound up with the one-year franchise tag salary of \$31.4 million, hardly a pittance. The Cowboys could wind up the losers here, though, with quarterback pay now stretching beyond the stratosphere thanks to Mahomes setting the bar so high.

Changes

The pandemic could lead to teams that remained relatively intact (Chiefs, Saints, Bills, Titans, Ravens, 49ers) having a major advantage over those experiencing upheaval.

That's particularly true where coaching changes were made: Mike McCarthy in Dallas, Ron Rivera in Washington, Matt Rhule in Carolina, Kevin Stefanski in Cleveland and Joe Judge with the Giants. The last three have never been head coaches in the NFL.

Stars making big adjustments could include Brady and another longtime standout quarterback, Philip Rivers, now in Indianapolis; running back Todd Gurley in Atlanta; receiver DeAndre Hopkins in Arizona; tight end Jason Witten in Seattle; safety Malcolm Jenkins in New Orleans; defensive end Calais Campbell in Baltimore; and linebacker Robert Quinn in Chicago.

Not to mention the humongous jump from college ball for the likes of top overall selection QB Joe Burrow in Cincinnati, defensive stud Chase Young in Washington, and the rest of a draft class that has yet to take a formal snap with their teams.

BJJ

From Page 20

has been a regular competitor in tournaments in Guam and the Philippines.

Rovnan is a relative newcomer at Trench Tech, as he has been with the group for only one year. He was entered in the absolute white belt men's division of last year's Art of War 14 Grappling Submission Challenge.

Meanwhile, Alvarez said more BJJ students would have been promoted if not for the pandemic that halted Trench Tech's sessions. BJJ classes at Trench Tech have resumed last month, but only for adults, as the group adheres to the safety measures local and federal authorities have set to stop the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Cuki Alvarez awards the blue belt to Ray Santos.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu black belt Cuki Alvarez, right, and Clint Dela Cruz, left, pose with Lo Itibus, Pali Rovnan, and Ray Santos for a group photo after the promotion ceremony at the Trench Tech Gym last Tuesday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



New look,
whole new
NBA game
experience

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune Sports

Distancing
difficult
around MLB
plates

PAGE 18



20 THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2020

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

3 get BJJ promotion



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Trench Trench's Cuki Alvarez, right (first photo), poses with Ray Santos, left, Lo Itibus, and Pali Rovnan after awarding the three Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu practitioners their blue belt during a promotional ceremony last Tuesday.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Three Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu practitioners moved up to the rankings during the Trench Tech promotion ceremony last Tuesday night at the Trench Tech Gym in Garapan.

Pali Rovnan, Lo Itibus, and Ray Santos were promoted from white to blue belt after putting in the work to improve their BJJ skills amid the limited time of training due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Blue belt is the second rank in BJJ progression system. White is for beginners, while red is the highest rank and the holder

is often referred to as grand-master. After the blue belt, the next rankings are purple, brown, black, red/black, and red/white.

"Before the pandemic, all of our members were steadily improving in their overall skill set, but these three individuals showed a significant spurt and spike in their improvement

and skills. And in the past month, when we opted to re-open our BJJ classes, they all put in hard work and dedication to get to this level," said Trench Tech owner and BJJ instructor Cuki Alvarez.

"The timing was just right and they all earned their new color by showing patience, persistence, and consistency de-

spite all the issues we are facing due to this pandemic," added the black belt Alvarez, who presented Rovnan, Itibus, and Santos their new belts in a ceremony attended by several other BJJ students of Trench Tech.

Itibus has been working out at Trench Tech for four years and on her BJJ skills in the last three. She debuted in the mat in 2019 when she represented the CNMI and Trench Tech in the Asian International BJJ Federation Jiu-Jitsu Championships held in Japan. Itibus fought in the light-featherweight division and lost to her Japanese foe via arm-bar submission, but despite the setback, she remained committed to BJJ and continued to work on her skills with the help of Alvarez and other Trench Tech members

Santos has more years of training than Itibus, as he has been joining Trench Tech's training sessions for over 10 years, however, he's been working out on and off. The new blue belt holder is also into weightlifting, competing in local and international tournaments. Santos won three silver medals in the 2014 Micronesian Games in Pohnpei and

See BJJ on Page 19

Lee attends ITF coaching webinar



Masters division tennis player Dong Min Lee attended a coaching webinar hosted by the International Tennis Federation and ITF Academy early this month.

Lee, who holds tennis lessons in one of the hotels on island, was among the 52 coaches/players that took the education and certification course, which ITF Participation and Coaching head Miguel Crespo conducted and ITF Development Officer (Pacific Oceania) Gary Purcell facilitated.

"The ITF coaching webinar was helpful to me in so many ways. I understood more about the ITF and its purpose. I was also able to know the benefits of having a coaching certificate," said Lee, who has been playing in various tournaments on Saipan and the proud father of Pacific Games gold medalist Carol Lee.

"I liked how the person who created the ITF Academy explained the ITF Academy website in details and how we can utilize its contents. I am also happy that I was able to see coaches from different countries in the Pacific region," said Lee.

Other countries that had representatives in the coaching webinar were American Samoa (1), Cook Islands (2), Fiji (10),

France (10), Guam (7), New Zealand (11), Norfolk Islands (1), Northern Mariana Islands (2), Papua New Guinea (2), Philippines (1), Solomon Islands (2), South Africa (1), Tahiti (1), and Vanuatu (10).

The course, besides introducing the ITF Academy website, also discussed the coach education system of national federations and the current challenges and opportunities for coaches at this time of the pandemic.

The ITF and ITF Academy will hold a follow-up webinar next month to address concerns that coaches raised during the July 8 and 9 sessions. The follow-up will cover the level or stages of the course and the coaching webinar's goals and structure. (Roselyn B. Monroyo)



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In this file photo, Dong Min Lee takes a timeout from his tennis lessons at Kanoa Resort.